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PLATT # IS RELIGION DYING

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Is Religion Dying?

A Symposium.

AN HOUR WITH THE PHILOSOPHERS.

W. H. PLATT, D.D., LL.D.,

AUTHOR OF "THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE SUPERNATURAL," "AFTER DEATH, WHAT?" "UNITY OF LAW," ETC., ETC.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

While investigating the opinions of well-known thinkers of the day upon the present religious outlook of the world, it occurred to me to make them talk to each other out of their books; so I brought them all together at an imaginary breakfast in the library of a literary gentleman, who should direct their supposed conversation upon the topics and within the scope arranged in the table of contents. Quotations thus take the shape of conversations.

W. H. P.

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CONTENTS.

PAGE

I. The Religion of Worship, without Morality, died by Exhaustion, ... 24

1. Ancestral Worship. 2. Nature-Worship. } Polytheism, ... 25

II. The Religion of Morality, without Worship, died by Exclusion, ... 27

1. Atheism, ... 27
   (*a*) Positivism, ... 27
   (*b*) Agnosticism, ... 27
2. Conflict between Science and Religion—Draper, . . 28
   (*a*) Conflict as to the Nature of God, ... 32
   (*b*) Conflict as to the Nature of the Soul, ... 33
   (*c*) Conflict as to the Nature of the World, . . . 34
   (*d*) Conflict as to the Criterion of Truth, ... 36
3. Bible Criticised—Ingersoll, ... 46
4. Sociological Drift, ... 57
   (*a*) A Morality of Philosophy without Religion, . . 57
   (*b*) A Morality of Religion without a God—Compte, . 67

III. The Religion of both Worship and Morality—Christ, ... 94

1. The Survival of the Fittest, ... 96
   (*a*) The Fittest by Nature, ... 98
   (*b*) The Fittest by Adaptation, ... 99
   (*c*) The Fittest by Resistance, ... 106
   (*d*) The Fittest by the Law of Evolution, . . . 122

IS RELIGION DYING?

[*The reader will remember that the matter under quotation-marks is extracted verbatim et literatim from the writings of the speakers, respectively.*]

THERE were supposed to be present at this symposium, besides the host, the Dean of the Cathedral, representative thinkers of different lines of thought—Theists, Atheists, Agnostics, and Positivists—irrespective of age or country. The thinkers are present in their thoughts, and thought keeps no chronology. The talkers all talk to the question, Is Religion Dying?

The host, not intending to advocate any doctrine unfriendly to religion, turned to the reverend Dean and remarked, "Of late we hear it asked, Is religion dying?"

Some one inquired, "What religion?" The host replied, "The question of this day is, not what religion, but any."

"All hope that it is dying in its errors," said the Dean, "but we know that it will live in its truths. As that which is divine in the Church cannot die, so that which is human in it cannot live. It will gain in moral influence as it loses in political power. If the priest is shorn of official domination, he will gain in affection as pastor and teacher. Truth is its own authority; and the Church will not be without authority

so long as it is the ground and pillar of the truth as Christ appointed. When it is other than that, or more or less than that, it is nothing."

"Or worse," it was exclaimed by several.

"Theologies may die, but not religion," rejoined the Dean. "The finite must ever lean upon the infinite, and that is religion."

"It may happen again," said the host, "that the people, as once in Greece and Rome, may turn for the truth from the Priests and the Temples to the Forum and to the Philosophers."

"And," said the Dean, "when they turned from the temples of even the false gods, they had a carnival of wickedness until they turned in worship to the altars of the true God."

"Yes," remarked the host, "social chaos reigns when men are not governed either by the reverence of religion or the wisdom of philosophy. Account for it as we may, all classes seem to be more and more indifferent to religion. The uninformed do not long believe what the well-informed doubt; nor will the uninformed long doubt what the well-informed believe. The authority of reason rather than that of faith, or the bare corporate authority of the Church, ultimately leads the world."

"And yet faith," observed the Dean, "has ever governed the world. It was Moses, Mahomet, Zoroaster, Confucius, Buddah, or Christ."

"What is faith?" asked the host.

"Faith," replied the Dean, "is the eye of religion, as intuition is the eye of reason. Those who admit reason cannot deny faith. The educated few may lose their faith through speculative thinking, but the uneducated many will retain their faith through a

true worship. The gulf between these two conditions is wide and deep."

"But education is rapidly narrowing this gulf."

"But the gulf which is narrowed by education is widened by toil. Somebody must work. Toilers cannot be thinkers. Trained thinking is the work of a life. He who toils by day cannot read metaphysics at night. The few ever have, and ever will, think for the many."

"What, then, governs the world, if intellectual improvement does not?"

"Organization governs the world. But what shall organize organization—faith or force?"

"Events."

"And whence come events but out of opinions, credulity, faith, passion, greed, ambition, and the master of masters—the inevitable."

"What is the inevitable?" asked the Dean. "Events inevitable to the power of man do not prove themselves inevitable to the power above man. The power to produce is the power to control."

"I can better describe than define the inevitable," replied the host. "Man must meet his obligations to man, irrespective of the theological dogmas of either. The fields must be planted and harvested; houses must be built; in a word, no task waits upon creed. Duty to all dominates opinion in each. A unit is next to nothing; but multiplied, it is next to everything."

"Human despair and human hope," it was remarked, "will ever in the future, as in the past, group mankind together in what is called the Church that formulates human or superhuman answers to the inexorable enigma of eternity. No man can disbelieve in everything. No creed includes all truth, and no

creed excludes all error. Error is the absence of truth."

"But is it not apparent that ecclesiastical authority, as authority, is losing its hold upon the mind and conduct of the world? Neither opinions nor conduct will ever be compulsory again, by Priest or Church. The Inquisition is the horror of the past and the impossibility of the future. We care not what may be the theology of our neighbor so long as he has no power to compel us to accept it. There is religious peace when there is no religious power to break it. The free individual makes the free Church. Give the conscience light, but not chains. There is the most power where there is the most truth."

"For all that the Church loses in one direction," interposed the Dean, "it gains something infinitely better in another. But has secular or domestic authority any better hold? Will the evolution of modern thought give us morality without authority? Can we hope that, in accumulated experience, there will be a minimum of human weakness and wickedness in a maximum of moral knowledge?

"In the restlessness of communism, socialism, agrarianism, there is the ever-recurring antagonism between class and class—condition and condition—status and status. The equilibrium of human social life is still unaccomplished. Capital and labor are still hostile, but mutually dependent. Race problems are still unsolved. The dependence of the human upon the superhuman is still questioned; yet nothing is changed of the eternal Order. Far above this individual unrest goes on the ceaseless rhythm of good and evil—of pleasure and pain—of hope and despair—of life and death."

"But, reverend Dean," interposed the host, "we all see an increasing disregard of the Sabbath, less and less reading of the Bible, and fewer family prayers. Public affairs go on because they must; but it is said that the Church has become a mere name, and has ceased to be a controlling power."

"Its human power," said the Dean, "may be less, but its superhuman power is more, as truth is seen to be more."

"Who is to certify what truth is?" inquired the host.

"Truth certifies itself," it was replied.

"The Church is a witness of the truth."

"But who certifies the Church?" inquired the host.

"God," answered the Dean, "certifies it through the ages. Scientists teach the survival of the fittest. Parallel all religions, and which is fittest?"

"What, then, is the cause," inquired the host, "of the present religious apathy?"

"The principal cause," responded the Dean, "is the preoccupied mind of the world, and an agnosticism as to the personality of the supernatural. Human religion is the worship of a superhuman person. We cannot worship impersonal power. Science kills religion only as it reduces power to an impersonal abstraction."

"How," asked the host, "do you prove either the fact of the supernatural or the personality of the supernatural?"

The Dean replied, "I beg to refer you to Mr. Herbert Spencer."

Mr. Spencer said, "I can only repeat for answer what I have said before—that all accountable and natural facts are proved to be, in their ultimate genesis, unaccountable and supernatural." *

* F. P., ch. v., § 30.

The Dean superadded, "That is deductively proved to be above nature which nature cannot inductively prove to be in nature. The supernatural is proved to be personal when it acts like a person."

It was asked, "When does the supernatural act like a person?"

The Dean answered, "When it acts with intelligence, will, and consciousness."

"How do you prove the intelligence and consciousness of the supernatural?"

"By my own intelligence and consciousness," replied the Dean. "As the greater cannot come from the less, my intelligence could have no unintelligent origin; my consciousness no unconscious origin; and all that constitutes my personality could have no impersonal origin."

"How do you prove the natural?"

The host answered, "By observation and experiment."

"But how," again inquired the Dean, "do you prove, and what do you know of, that power manifested through all phenomena that you observe and analyze? You may observe and analyze that which you call nature; but that which you cannot analyze must be called supernature, because above your observation and analysis. But when you have proved nature, then, all that you do not prove or disprove is supernature. If Mr. Spencer had not planted the word 'supernatural' firmly in the terminology of speculative thought, we might dispense with both words, nature and supernature, and substitute the word universe, as less speculative and more comprehensive. We would, at least, stop discussion in that direction. The word universe would then include a superior-

nature in intelligent personality, and an inferior-nature in unintelligent impersonality. The word would be changed, if the idea is not. In asking for the proof of supernature, you assume that you have proved nature. The proof of the natural is as difficult as the proof of the supernatural."

The host said, "Let me again ask you to extend your explanation of the supernatural?".

"As the knowledge of the existence of a stone," replied the Dean, "is not the stone itself, so, in a wider sense, the knowledge of nature is not nature itself. That knowledge of nature which is not nature, or the thing known, is supernature-knowledge; and, if the supernature is personal, it is God. Thus, by a knowledge of nature (which knowledge cannot be nature) there is a stand-point in the sphere of knowledge outside of nature."

It was asked, "Where is the all-knowing mind to know all nature?"

"Rather," interposed the Dean, "where is the all-knowing mind to create all nature? If our minds can know what they do not create, certainly the mind that creates must know what it does create."

"Suppose no mind creates anything?" it was asked

"Then," said the Dean, "an unintelligent universe is as glorious as an intelligent universe; and mind is not a dignity, if it is not a degradation, and a stone is equal to man?"

"Does not that teaching," inquired the host, "assume the very point to be proved—that the knowledge of nature is no part of nature."

"Which side," politely asked the Dean, "does the most assuming—your side or mine? Is it for me to prove the negative—that the knowledge of nature is

no part of nature—or is it for you to prove affirmatively, that the knowledge of nature is a part of nature, as you claim? In other words, that the knowledge of an object is the object, or that the object is the knowledge of it, or that the stone has knowledge of itself? You seem to ignore the distinction between the object and the subject. But this you cannot do. The universe cannot be an object without raising the idea of a correlative subject outside of the universe. If the mind of man knows a stone, are both the mind that knows and the stone that is known, in the same objective plane? If it take subjective mind to know objective matter, then there must be a difference between mind and matter; and if matter be in the lines of nature, mind must be in the lines of supernature. Do you not, in the use of the word nature, assume that the name nature proves nature to be all? Unconsciousness does not include consciousness—ignorance does not include knowledge—impersonality does not include personality.

"You cannot arbitrarily make a word cover inconsistent and contradictory ideas. The word universe includes the produced and the producer. These ideas cover all that is—the το εν. For the sake of convenience, you may call the objective part nature and the subjective part supernature, but I protest that you shall not, by the easy assumptions hid in the use of the word nature, dash out the grandest side of the universe—the supernatural. Any way, if the knowledge of a part of nature is itself nature, then one part of nature knows another part of nature."

The host admitted that it would seem so.

"Moreover," continued the Dean, "as consciousness is superior to unconsciousness, as knowledge is

superior to ignorance, so the knowing part of nature is superior to the part known, which knows nothing."

"Yes," said the host, "but the knowing part and the part unknown are one——"

The Dean (interrupting), "But not the same."

The host inquired if nature as a whole did not include all its parts.

"This book," said the Dean, "is a part of nature; my knowledge of it, according to your argument, is also a part of nature. Then, to repeat the argument, as the knowledge of the existence of this book is not the known book itself, so the knowledge of a part of nature is itself a part of nature, but it is not the part known."

The host assented, saying, "Nature is held to include both the part that knows and the part that is known."

"Then," said the Dean, "the equation stands thus: on one side is knowledge, consciousness, feeling, personality; on the other is blindness, unconsciousness, insensateness, impersonality. If both sides make one nature, then the name nature, which has been used to express only material phenomena, is now used to express mental phenomena as well."

A gentleman on the right of the host remarked that, "Those who use the word nature to express what the two words, nature and supernature, formerly expressed, mean to deny supernature. They do not use the word supernature, because they totally deny the supernatural."

"Those who deny the supernatural in one sense," remarked the Dean, "yet believe in it in another. Supernature is that in nature which we do not understand in that which we think we do understand. To

say that nature is all does not destroy the supernatural in nature. To refuse to use a name does not annihilate the object. Supernature is all that which nature is not, and for which nature cannot account.

"But so far as there is no belief in the supernatural, the supernatural ceases to influence the life. The conscience stays itself upon nature and its hidden ends. The secular pressure monopolizes the soul, and man stands mutely awaiting the inevitable. Man is preoccupied, as we have said, with the pressure of earthly ideas and motives. We reap that which we sow. Worldly cares, trials, and necessities exclude religion from the mind of the poor; and the pleasures of riches and the pride of ambition monopolize the mind of the rich.

"The religion which is first out of the mind, as with the poor, whose only thought is for bread, is second out of the life; and the religion which is first out of the life, as with the rich, whose general purpose is for self-indulgence, is second out of the mind.

"Life with such is a present fight, not a future hope; and all thoughts of a future responsibility go to sleep with the fatigues of a present toil. The toilers are too tired to fear death. The non-religious education which all now receive is the intellectual light that reveals the paradise of wealth and style which but few can hope to reach. The disappointment at the inequalities of life and of Providence embitters all that it does not corrupt, and makes a multitude of pessimists who suffer to one optimist who enjoys. The doctrine of the survival of the fittest is terribly exemplified in the increasing combinations of the many poor against the few rich, accepting the doctrine that might makes right. If there are no compensations

for Lazarus hereafter, they say, then every one is wise to be a Dives here. Man will attempt to adjust here what there is no God to adjust hereafter. Communism is the child of Atheism. Physical force is inaugurated to the vacant throne of the moral.

"Like drowning men, the struggle is for life, not for immortality. The care is for the present, not the future. Men turn from the ideal to the real—from the possible to the actual. Aspiration is paralyzed. Competition is inexorably severe and universal. The fittest only survive. Civilization has so multiplied the artificial wants of all classes that the struggle to gratify them absorbs all other aims. The ungratified poor are embittered, and the satiated rich are only eager of new pleasures.

"Human life, now as ever, keeps its records on the sands of the shores of Time : the past is erased, the future is unguessed; the present is read, unpondered, and then obliterated forever. In a word, skeptical Positivism holds life to be a fact without a comprehensible past or a conceivable future. Past history—its literature, its philosophies, its events—are only unread epitaphs upon the multitudinous tomb of humanity. Life has become exhausted—exhausted of interest to the rich, except to be richer, and of interest to the poor, except the fear of being poorer. Hitherto, to the poor, there has been an optimism as to the future lighting up the pessimism of the present; but now an unintermittent and universal competition for daily food, raiment, and shelter in some, and for new pleasures in others, makes all classes mere walking encyclopedias of human and agnostic unrest.

"The presence of the rich emphasizes the poverty of the poor. The laborer feels no benignant Providence

in his tasks of the present, nor of spiritual compensations in the uncertainties of the future. The trial of human virtue is beyond human strength. Hope deferred makes the heart sick. Human faith dies in human disappointments. A dark present makes a darker future ; and a dark future makes a darker present. Those who hope nothing from the future make the most of the present; and those who make the most of the present hope nothing from the future.

"For this apathy there is no one cause. The race is made up of so many individual units, with such various conditions, temperaments, and intellectuality, that no one cause can be assigned for the character of an age. It is as natural for some to doubt as for others to believe. Unrelieved poverty and drudgery embitters ; unchastened riches indulge and flatter humanity. The prayer of Agur was : ' Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me; lest I be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord ? or lest I be poor, and steal ' (Prov. 30: 8).

"Multitudes of people no longer form theories of life or of death. Absorbed in their pursuits, or riding their hobbies, they have ceased to interrogate the sphinx-universe, and live on because they do not die. Out of the momentary engrossment, life is frivolous and aimless. All seek to be amused. Men laugh, and let the inevitable come. In a present excitement they think not of a future responsibility. There is no hope for any."

" Will the Church live and give hope ?" it was asked.

It was answered, " As said before, all that is divine in it will live, and all that is human in it will die.

"Religion comes out of what man thinks of the infinite—the eternal—the mystery of the soul which makes its own creed. Religion cannot die; for thoughts upon the infinite—the eternal—cannot die. It is an age of inquiry, it is true, but the broader faith of to-morrow takes the place of the narrow one of to-day. It would be wiser for religion to seek to guide, than to repress, this mental activity. Rules change, but principles abide. If the Church is dead as an organic ruler, religion lives as a diffused power.

"The Church will live if it is worth living, as a teacher and witness of the truth; and, if not worth living except as an exponent of human priestly power, the sooner it is dead the better. But I think we can trust the Church of the Living God to the care of the Living God. If it is His, He will take care of it; and if it is not His, no one need take care of it. The Church is all right. The travesties and misrepresentations of it only are wrong. The human mind was never more earnest or sincerely eager for the truth—'the truth as it is in Jesus.'

"Lord Macaulay remarked that 'the Church had been compared to the Ark of which we read in the book of Genesis; but never was the comparison more just than when she alone rode, amid darkness and the tempest, above the deluge, beneath which lay entombed all the great works of power and wisdom, bearing within her the feeble germs from which a second and more glorious civilization was to spring.'* 'The Church saw the commencement of all the governments and of all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world; and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all.

* Hist. England, Ch. 1.

She was great and respected before the Saxon set foot in Britain; before the Frank had passed the Rhine; when Grecian eloquence still flourished at Antioch; when idols were still worshiped in the temple of Mecca. And she may still exist in undiminished vigor when some lonely traveler from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's.' *

"But now it is truth, not assertion, that is demanded. It is principle, not a rule; a conviction, not a conceit, that is sought; a superhuman revelation, not a human scheme. Never before was there such an impatience at everything human in religion, and it is indignantly rejected—human assumptions of occult mysteries, of exoteric powers, and of esoteric acquaintance with the invisible. A human church, with human ministers claiming to exercise superhuman authority over human hopes and fears, drives the enlightened into a just hatred of a human church, and into an unjust hatred of a true superhuman religion, with a divine, superhuman head. The world will turn from these falsities to Christ, and from a church of this world to Christ's Church, which is not of this world. If there is one hatred of this age more intense than that of all others, it is of the human element yet obtruding itself in our superhuman religion. There is no power in the church like God's power, and He will take care of His own."

The host asked, "What is truth without authority?"

"What is authority without truth?" was replied. "Just as the church loses truth, it loses authority."

"Can it ever lose either?"

*Essay on Ranke's Hist. of the Popes.

"According to Anglicanism, Roman errors destroy Roman authority; and, according to Romanism, Anglican truths want the saving power of Roman authority."

"Is science," inquired the host, "to uproot religion, and with the fall of religion, if it fall, is morality to fail too? What is before us?"

"Probably," remarked Dr. Frothingham, "we shall go on in the future, as in the past, gaining purity, strength, and knowledge as the future of the great organism Humanity perfects itself. Religion, morality, science, are all ministering angels on the rounds of the spiritual ladder leading upward out of sight. It matters not whether morality preceded religion, or religion morality, so long as both abide with man and enable science more and more to disclose the foundations upon which the pillars of the universe rest. There was a time when religion had society all to itself; because feelings, hopes, fears, anticipations come first.

"Long before men think, study, reason, compare, adjust their ideas, understand themselves, they feel intensely. Their dread of the supernatural power is fearful; their hope of blessedness to come to them proves a source outside of their lives and takes up all feelings that their heart can entertain. Thus religion gets established, instituted, organized, long before morals come into the field. Hence we see how it is that religion dictates morality.* What folly then to tell us that religion has had its day, and a very long day; a day of power amounting to sovereignty; a day of opulence, command, honor, tribute to all mankind; a day when it has had human affairs, secular as well as spiritual,

* Frothingham: Visions of the Future, p. 79.

at its disposal. It is said that it has lived its life and now must give place to other powers—to philosophy, science, literature, politics, social reform—newly born Titans who claim their opportunity to dictate to men the terms of life. There is much reason in this argument, which yet as a teacher of religion I venture to combat, still pressing its claim to respect, reverence, and obedience. Religion is the oldest spirit in the world—the most venerable. It has been, in its day, the teacher of art and literature—yes, of philosophy and science. For philosophy and science have lain shivering babes in its cradle. It has been the benefactor of mankind when they had no other friend. It has stood by the poor when the most abandoned. It has raised the despised when they were tottering and crushed to the earth. It proclaimed the brotherhood of man in ages that were torn with civil and social strife. It has inculcated sentiments of democracy when aristocracy wore the crown and bore the sceptre and flaunted its banners in the air, and imperialism held possession of the secular world. Hence I maintain that this power which has swayed human conscience for thousands of years, which has had a hold on human hopes and fears such as no other power ever had or ever can hope to have—this power which has opened the gates of the future to the contemplation of morality, which has sheltered mankind beneath convictions of divine justice, and has consoled them by thoughts of a heavenly care, has its right still to speak, and its title to be heard."*

"Which," inquired the host, "do you think—science, religion, or morality—can meet the want of the age?"

"The need of this age," remarked Dr. Frothingham,

* Frothingham's Vision of the Future, p. 148–9.

" is for sympathy, mutual understanding, and recognition between the high and the low, the strong and weak, great and small, rich and poor, wise and simple, good and bad—a practical recognition of brotherhood, the acknowledgment of fellowship, the obliteration of caste, the diminution of local and sectarian prejudice, the free, open-handed, cordial admission on the part of every human being of the wants, needs of every other human being. This want, deeply felt, passionately uttered, breaks out in socialism, in communism, in the strikes and labor-unions that terrify the community. This animates the rebellion of the poor against the rich. All this turmoil of unrest, this clamor of want, these agonized prayers of suffering men, are cries for sympathy, recognition, human support and help. Nothing more than this is really asked. The immediate claim is on the surface. The real need is that heart-need of sympathy. It is for religion to meet that want, for religion alone can. It alone has the sovereignty over human nature, the power to touch the depth of feeling, to stimulate purpose, to draw men away from their selfish attractions and open to them the region of disinterested endeavor and unconditional love. Its symbols are the cross, which means surrender of the individual to the universal, and the cup, which means the mingling of the universal with the individual. It is, besides, not the possession of the instructed, as science is, not the prerogative of the disciplined, as philosophy is, but the privilege of mankind. It appeals to the veneration of the ages. The task is for religion. Science cannot undertake it—science is engrossed by the pursuit of knowledge. Philosophy cannot attempt it—philosophy is engrossed by the effort to classify knowl-

edge. Religion must enter on the duty. This mighty spirit, which is more than science or philosophy, of which they are the servants, friends, co-workers, but for which they cannot be substitutes—this mighty spirit which alone now has the power to stir the human heart, wake up the human conscience to heroic achievement, must break its bonds and spring forth to meet a desire which has at length become articulate and imperious."*

Some one remarked that, "The opinion of the reverend Doctor seems to preclude the questions, "Is morality progressing or retrograding? Are morals higher or lower than they were? Are we gaining or losing in ethical principle? If religion is before morality, and religion is the great power now as in all the past, of course it will hold up morality in the future as it has held it up in the past."

"I contend with all my might," said Dr. F., with distinct emphasis, "with the utmost clearness of persuasion, with the utmost earnestness of conviction, that the morals of the world are improving year by year; that we are getting nearer the heart of principles, that we are understanding the drift of laws, that we are comprehending the conditions and taking advantage of the opportunities that work together to make society what it ought to be. We are not called upon to pronounce an encomium upon the morals of modern society. They are certainly bad enough. No one has painted worse than in my judgment they deserve. But this is not the question. The question is whether morals are getting better or worse. Are they in the way of improvement on past states, or are they, as many would have us believe, declining? We shall

* Visions of the Future, p. 144–5.

never have perfect morality while there is room for improvement, while the law of progress holds. Long after we shall have passed from the scene and been forgotten, nothing like a kingdom of heaven on earth will be seen. Let us not boast of the excellence of established morals. Our age has its peculiar dangers, its characteristic vices, its special sins. Every age has. In some respects we are worse than those who have gone before. We have left virtues behind which they possessed. Still, I hold, in spite of all that can be said, in spite of all that can be imagined, that condition of things is vastly and essentially better than it has been.* War is less frequent and less barbarous; slavery is gone ; humane societies are rising up on all sides; law is more defined, and religion more universal."

"Then, of course," interrupted the host, "religion cannot be dying. I think the remark is yours, Dr. Draper, that no spectacle presented to the thoughtful mind is more solemn, more mournful, than the dying of an ancient religion, which in its day has given consolation to many generations of men."†

The Doctor bowed assent.

"If it be supposed that the Christian religion is dying," remarked the preacher, "the question is, can civilization afford to let it die? And yet our Saviour asked, 'When the Son of Man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?'"

"It would seem," remarked the host, "that no one is better prepared to answer Dr. Draper's remark than yourself."

"Then I should say," replied the parish rector, "that so far as the Christian religion is concerned, it

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*A Vision of the Future, p. 67.

† Draper: Conflict Between Science and Religion.

is not dying, but only increasing its life. I know that some think that the enlightened world is more and more dropping the worship of the supernatural, and resting more and more upon the conclusions of mere science and experience as a guide to conduct. Observe the distinction between an *exhausted* religion and an *excluded* religion. It was exhausted at Cæsar and needed to be substituted; it was only excluded at Napoleon, and awaited its recall. The expectation of some now is to exclude religion from morality, and by exclusion to extinguish it; but as there is no persistent life of faith without works, so there is none of works without faith. To have either truly, is to have both really. Together they live; apart they die. The worship was first of many gods, then of one God, and now the tendency is of no God—polytheism, monotheism, atheism."

I. The Religion of Worship, without Morality, died by Exhaustion.

"Polytheism is the religion of a worship without a morality; and it died by exhaustion. It had faith without works, or rather superstition without conduct.

"The religion of Greece and Rome regarded what the gods were, and what they could do for man, not what man should be to the gods. The idea was the providence of the gods, not the morality of man. These gods were either the spirits of dead ancestors or the personified elements or forces of Nature. These religions did not look to conduct, and they became extinct. They were false, theistic, and not truly humanistic. Credulity became exhausted, and died because there was nothing in it to believe.

"These Pagan mythologies may have had a mis-

sion to the imagination, but none to the moral feelings. Their gods were not worshipped for guidance in conduct, but were worshipped only as fear knelt before power. Family morality came out of the worship of family ancestors. These two contemporary religions—the worship of ancestors and the worship of the personified elements—both expired between the ridicule of the philosophers, after they came, and the rise of the Plebeian power in the State. As the plebeians had no family gods to worship, out of which came family morality, and as the gods of Olympus were powers to be propitiated, not teachers of righteousness, we can easily see how, with the decline of theology, such as it was, worship and morality declined. When these ancient beliefs expired, Cæsar came to assume that control over the conduct of men which the failure of these beliefs had relinquished ; and for a time there was what some Agnostics now hope to set up again.

"The future governs the present, and so man has always had a religion of some sort. In the earliest ages of the world the Greek and Roman Aryans had two : one for the family constitution and morality, called ancestral worship, and a mythological one for the individual imagination and the spectacular ritual of the State. But while the philosophers ridiculed the ancestral superstition out of the credulity of men, the State offered no other basis of morality than its own laws, and all religion expired. The gods of Olympus were the personifications of the elements, but no teachers of morality. Indeed, they were generally horrid monsters of cruelty and lust."

"Our gods reflect ourselves," said Dr. Frothingham.

"As gods, if we may speak of them as more than one, were they not infinitely above the people? Did the God of the Hebrews," asked the host, "or Christ of the Christians reflect those who worshipped them? Would it not be more strictly according to the light of history to say that the worship of the true God lifts up the people, and that of the false gods degrades them? The Pagan gods were either dead ancestors carrying human passions up into the supposed power of gods, or the deified elements lowering the power of gods down to the standard of human passions. They were powers, but not virtues. They were worshipped to propitiate their evil passions."

"Yes," said Mr. Ingersoll, with a tone of sarcasm, "these gods were manufactured after numberless fashions. Some have a thousand arms, some a hundred heads; some were adorned with necklaces of living snakes; some were armed with clubs, some with sword and shield, and some with bucklers; some were jealous; some were foolish; some turned themselves into men, and some into swans." *

"They were poor indeed," replied the preacher, "but they were the best the people knew of. Paul describes them in worse terms than you do. He says that the people of those times, 'professing themselves to be wise, they became fools; and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves; who changed the truth of God into a lie, and

* Ingersoll: Gods.

worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator. As they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient, being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness ; full of envy, murder, deceit, malignity ; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful. We are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.' "

II. The Religion of Morality, without Worship, died by Exclusion.

1. *Atheism.*

(*a*) *Positivism.*

"Yet," says M. Comte (the teacher of Positivism, or the philosophy of ignorance towards God, and faith in man—Comte and his followers teach that no religious faith is a delusion), "from a religious point of view, it is evident that no belief, especially no system of worship, could ever have grown up which did not at the same time serve some useful purpose in the intellectual and moral development of humanity. Hence, every religious faith is treated by Positivism with reverence within the sphere of its own social mission. Every one has such a mission, and remains progressive until it is accomplished."*

(*b*) *Agnosticism*, or a morality without a worship.

In this, religion is excluded, but neither exhausted nor extinguished. It is works without faith. It is

* Edger: Positivism, p. 20.

first, a morality without religion, and second, it is a religion without a God. But the full discussion of Agnosticism must be deferred until we come to it as a form of Positivism.

In seeking to establish the independent dominion of morality without worship—ethics without rites—conduct without faith—faith, rites, and worship must be displaced. To do this there must be considered the alleged conflict between science and dogma, the renewed criticisms upon Bible statements, and sociological phenomena. It is here necessary to show, not only that morality can stand alone, but that it must so stand, in consequence of the decay of religion brought about by

2. *The conflict between Religion and Science.*

"No religion will die," said the host, "which is fit to live."

"Judging the future by the past," remarked some one, "can we resist the conclusion that a general and sure decay is going on both in Judaism and Christianity? In their conflicts with science, they must perish, or at least be so greatly weakened as to cease to be factors in civilization."

Dr. Draper here remarked that, "There is an infancy, youth, manhood, old age, and death to religion as well as to philosophy. The latter was born under the shadow of the Pyramids; after many wanderings for a thousand years around the shores of the Mediterranean, it came back to its native place, and under the shadow of the Pyramids it died."

"I am relieved to hear you say," interrupted the Dean, "that philosophy was not killed by religion, but died a natural death."

"Religion," continued Dr. Draper, not noticing the

interruption, "seems to be nearing the end of its ancient circuits, to enter its crypt of universal death. For centuries before the birth of Christ, Greece was fast outgrowing her ancient faith. Her philosophers, in their studies of the world, had been profoundly impressed with the contrast between the majesty of the operations of Nature and the worthlessness of the divinities of Olympus."*

"And yet," said the Dean, "the Olympian Gods known to the philosophers were the elements of nature personified and deified by the fathers of the philosophers. The *religion* of the ancients came from ancestral worship of the Penates and Lares, and not from the mythological gods of the elements. It was the nature-worshippers of a later age reforming the ancestral and nature-worship of a former age."

"The philosophers," replied the Doctor, "took the place of the priests. But this did not happen without resistance. At first the public, and particularly its religious portion, denounced the rising doubts as atheism. They despoiled some of their goods and exiled others; some they put to death. They asserted that what had been believed by pious men in old times, and had stood the test of ages, must necessarily be true."

"Is it not wise," asked the Dean, "to adhere to that which has stood the *test* of ages? New things are not always better than the old. The ancients, as all must do, for ages, stood by the tried rather than experiment with the untried."

"But their efforts," continued the Doctor, "were in vain, for there are predestined phases through which

* Draper: Intellectual Development, and Con. Sci. and Re., p. 1.

on such occasions public opinion must pass. What it has received with veneration it begins to doubt, then it offers new interpretations, then subsides into dissent, and ends with the rejection of the whole as a fable.* In their secession, the philosophers and historians were followed by poets, and finally by the common people."

"What then?" ejaculated the Dean. "Are we too to witness a religious decay, and all the social chaos that have hitherto followed such moral conversions? I think you yourself said in your 'Intellectual Development of Europe,' 'Nations plunged in the abyss of irreligion must necessarily be nations in anarchy.'"

"Whatever was the result," answered the Doctor, "the modern Jew already repudiates the supernatural element of Judaism, and the Christian pulpit has changed its themes and tone."

"To what do you attribute this change?" asked the host.

"To the long and irrepressible conflict," replied the Doctor, "between science and religion."

"I am surprised to learn," remarked the Dean, "that there has been or is such a conflict. All truths are consistent. Religion has had its great universal contest with the evil passions of men, but not with learning."

"There have been four of these conflicts," remarked the Doctor.† "The first was the conflict respecting the unity of God; the second respected the nature of the soul; the third the nature of the world; and the fourth the criterion of truth."

"To be certain," was the reply, "to escape what

* Draper, Id.

† Draper: Conflict between Science and Religion.

Herbert Spencer calls being unscientific as science and unreligious as religion in considering these alleged conflicts, I beg you will say what you mean by science and what you mean by religion."

"Science," said the Doctor, "is a knowledge of material nature, attained and verified by observation and experiment. By religion, as engaged in this conflict, I do not mean Judaism, for the Jews founded many schools and colleges. They particularly studied the science of medicine. Of all men, they saw the course of human affairs from the most exalted point of view. Among the special sciences they became proficient in mathematics and astronomy.* I do not mean Mohammedanism, for the Mohammedan cultivation of science dates from their capture of Alexandria.† I do not refer to the Oriental religions, nor to the Greek Church. This church has never since the restoration of science arrayed itself in opposition to the advancement of knowledge. On the contrary, it has always met it with welcome. It has observed a reverential attitude to truth, from whatever quarter it may come. Recognizing the apparent discrepancies between its interpretations of revealed truth and the discoveries of science, it has always expected that satisfactory explanations and reconciliations would ensue, and in this it has not been disappointed. I refer generally in the remark made to the Roman Church, partly because its adherents compose the majority of Christendom, partly because its demands are the most pretentious, and partly because it has commonly sought to enforce those demands by the civil power. None of the Protestant churches have

* Draper's Con. Sci. and Re., p. 145.

† A. D. 638.

accepted a position so imperious—none have ever had such wide-spread political influence. In the most part they have been averse to constraint, and, except in a very few instances, their opposition has not passed beyond the exciting of theological odium.* It is also to be said that the Roman Church is far more a political than a religious combination."†

(*a*) *Conflict as to the Nature of God.*

"The conflicts of science, then, it seems," remarked the Dean, "have not been with religion at all, but only with a political institution known as the Roman Church. For the sake of the young, who may be seriously miseducated in this matter, would it not be better to adhere to historical accuracy, and not speak of a conflict between science and religion, when confessedly there is none, but call these conflicts, conflicts between Science and Political Power--the Roman Church. That would be, at least, according to your own enlightened admission."

"We shall see how best to describe them," replied he Doctor, "when we have stated them more fully."

"The first conflict, you say," remarked the Dean, encouraging the Doctor to go on, "was as to the nature of God."

"Yes," answered the Doctor, "and it involved the rise of Mohammedanism. Its result was, that much of Asia and Africa, with the historic cities of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Carthage, were wrenched from Christendom, and the doctrine of the Unity of God established in the larger part of what had been the Roman Empire. This political event was followed by the restoration of science, the establishment of

* Draper's Con. Sci. and Re.,.Preface.

† Draper: Conflict Sci. and Re., p. 329.

colleges, schools, libraries throughout the dominions of the Arabians. Those conquerors, pressing forward rapidly in their intellectual development, rejected the anthropomorphic ideas of the nature of God remaining in their popular beliefs and accepted other more philosophical ones, akin to those that had long previously been attained to in India."*

"But," interrupted the Dean, "this was a conflict between religion and religion, not between science and religion. The nature of God is a question of theology and not one of science. The word science, in its true sense, comprehends all positive and definite knowledge of the order existing among surrounding phenomena.† If questions as to the nature of God be embraced in all positive knowledge, then all theological questions become scientific questions, and the conflict is not between science and religion, but between science of people in the Church and science of people not in the Church; and I think, as I understood from statement of your second conflict, that it is of the same kind. Will you please state it again?"

(*b*) *Conflict respecting the Nature of the Soul.*

"Ideas respecting the nature of God," replied the Doctor, "necessarily influence ideas respecting the nature of the soul. The Eastern Asiatics had adopted the conception of an impersonal God, and, as regards the soul, its necessary consequence, the doctrine of the emanation and absorption of the soul. The Vedic theology developed itself into Buddhism, which has become the faith of a majority of the human race. This system acknowledges that there is a Supreme Power, but denies that there is a Supreme Being."‡

* Draper: Science and Religion.

† Herbert Spencer: First Principles.

‡ Draper: Con. Sci. and Rel., 122.

"Is this Supreme Power blind? If there can be a Supreme Power," interposed the Dean, "why not a Supreme Person?"

"It contemplates," continued the Doctor, "the existence of Force, giving rise in its manifestations to matter. It adopts the theory of emanation and absorption. In a burning taper it sees an effigy of man—an embodiment of matter and an evolution of force. If we interrogate it respecting the destiny of the soul, it demands of us what has become of the flame when it is blown out; and in what condition it was before the taper was lighted. Was it a nonentity? Has it been annihilated? It admits that the idea of personality which has deluded us through life may not be instantaneously extinguished at death, but may be lost by slow degrees. On this is founded the doctrine of transmigration. But at length reunion with the universal intellect takes place; Nirvana is reached; oblivion is attained, a state that has no relation to matter, space, or time; the state in which the deportep flame of the taper has gone; the state in which we were before we were born. This was the doctrine of Aristotle first, and afterwards of Averroes."

"But," said the Rector, "how is all this a matter of science? The nature of the soul, like the nature of God, is not material, and therefore not the subject of scientific investigation. We know them by reason and consciousness and not by experiment. Two out of the four conflicts you have mentioned, therefore, are not between science and religion."

(*c*) *Conflict as to the Nature of the World.*

"However that may be," replied the Doctor, "as to the first and second conflicts, there can be none as to the third, respecting the nature of the world. The Scriptural view was that the earth is a flat surface,

whereas the scientific and true view is that the earth is a globe."*

"Are you not mistaken in the view you ascribe to Scripture?" inquired the Dean. "The seventh verse of the ninety-eighth Psalm, as found in the Evening Service of the Prayer Book, speaks of the earth as 'the *round* world.'"

"How long," inquired the host, "was that translation after Copernicus had proved the centrality of the sun and the rotundity of the earth?"

"It was not after it at all," replied the Rector. "The translation of the Psalms in the Episcopal Psalter is taken from Miles Coverdale's translation, made by order of Henry VIII., and published in 1537, six years before the death of Copernicus and before the publication of his system of the universe. The fables of the Pagan religion and the ignorance of science no doubt regarded the earth as a flat surface; but for nearly three thousand years the Psalms of David have taught otherwise. The Bible was all right, whether the Church was or not."

"Anyhow," remarked the Doctor, "on the basis of this view of the flat structure of the world great religious systems have been founded."

"But in all this," replied the Rector, "systems of religion have not been based on the form of the world at all. Science misinformed religion. Claudius Ptolemy, a scientist and not a priest, held religion to an astronomical error for thirteen hundred years, until Copernicus, a monk of the Church, informed religion correctly upon the subject."†

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* See head-notes to Chap. vi., Draper's Conflict between Science and Religion.

† Draper: Conflict between Science and Religion, p. 157.

"Yes," said the Doctor, "but religion resisted, sometimes by bloodshed, attempts that have been made to correct its incontestable errors—a resistance grounded on the suspicion that the localization of heaven and hell, and the supreme value of man in the universe, might be affected."*

"It is a virtue of religion," replied the Dean, "to be loyal to truth, or what it has been taught to be truth. Scientific convictions are no more tolerant than religious. The world and the cause of truth is better for the courage of convictions, whether right or wrong, than without it. Religion is greedy for truth. The greater creation, the greater is the Creator. Religion rejoices in the true interpretation of nature, but is impatient at what she has been taught to regard as misinterpretation. Prompted by religion, science has perfected knowledge."

"As some think exactly the reverse to be true," remarked the host, "please state any help religion has been to science, directly or indirectly.'

"How was it," said the preacher, "about architecture? Have not the religions of the past inspired and supported all its development? The great temples were votive to gods. Without the religion of the past the world would not have had the temples of the past. Nearly, if not all, of the great astronomers were professors of the Christian religion."

Francis Galton here remarked that "seven out of every ten scientists of the present day were members of some one of the Christian churches, and they admit help from religion."†

(*a*) *The fourth conflict was as to the Criterion of Truth.*

* Id., p. 155.

† See Galton's Men of Science.

"All literary confusion and darkness," said the Doctor, "only make the criterion of truth the more uncertain. 'What is truth?' was the passionate demand of a Roman procurator on one of the most momentous occasions in history; and the Divine Person who stood before him, to whom the interrogation was addressed, made no reply—unless, indeed, silence contained the reply.* It might be supposed that a revelation from God to man would make all certain, yet even as to revelation how uncertain all is."

"But," replied the preacher, "it is difficult for men to come to the same conclusion as regards even material and visible things, unless they stand at the same point of view. God's revealed communication to man is ever one and the same, but human minds differ in thought, and so differ in its interpretation."

"It is this very difference of thought and interpretation," said the Doctor, "that makes doubtful the probability of such a revelation at all. Besides, what God is said to have revealed in Scripture and what He has actually revealed in nature is absolute opposition. The Pentateuch is affirmed to have been written by Moses, under the influence of a divine inspiration; but no man may dare to impute them to the inspiration of Almighty God."†

"Bacon was quite right," interposed Professor Blackie,‡ "when he tells us not to mix theology with science; but he would be altogether wrong if he were to tell us not to mix up theology with philosophy. Science works in a narrow range, and has no function to meddle with philosophical and theologi-

* Draper: Conflict between Science and Religion, ch. viii.

† Ib.

‡ Natural History of Atheism, p. 237.

cal questions at all. The question of design or the cause of things is a philosophical question, and the moment a scientific man either asserts or denies it, he walks out of his proper sphere, and is, or attempts to be, a philosopher. Science investigates only facts, religion or theology both causes and ends, and there cannot possibly be, in the nature of things, any conflict between them. To suppose one, is to force it."

Mr. Herbert Spencer remarked : " Doubtless science is the enemy of the superstitions that cloak themselves with the name of religion, but it is not the enemy of the essential religion which the superstitions darken. Doubtless in the science of to day there reigns an irreligious spirit, but not in the true science, which, not stopping at the surface, penetrates to the depths of nature. With regard to human traditions, and the authority that consecrates them, true science maintains a lofty attitude ; but before the impenetrable veil that hides the absolute it humbles itself : it is at once truly proud and truly humble. The sincere philosopher alone (and by these words we mean not the astronomer, who computes distances, not the naturalist, who defines species, but he who through the lower seeks the higher, to stop only at the highest), the sincere philosopher at once can know how high— we say not above human knowledge, but above human conception—is the universal power, whereof nature, like thought, is a manifestation."

Professor Tyndall said : *

" If asked to deduce from the physical interaction of the brain-molecules the least of the phenomena of sensation or thought, we must acknowledge our helplessness.

* Fortnightly Review.

"The mechanical philosopher, as such, will never place a state of consciousness and a group of molecules in the relation of mover and moved. In passing from the one to the other we meet a blank which the logic of deduction is unable to fill.

"Physical considerations do not lead to the final explanation of all that we feel and know. We meet a problem which transcends any conceivable expansion of the powers which we now possess.

"We may think over the subject again and again, but it eludes all intellectual presentation.

"Having thus exhausted physics and reached its very rim, a mighty mystery still looms beyond us. We have, in fact, made no step toward its solution. We try to soar in a vacuum when we endeavor to pass by logical deduction from one to the other.

"Religious feeling is as much a verity as any other part of human consciousness; and against it, on its subjective side, the waves of science beat in vain.

"Carlyle's contention at bottom always was that the human soul has claims and yearnings which physical science cannot satisfy."

"It seems high time to me," said Dr. Virchow, "to enter an energetic protest against the attempts that are made to proclaim the problems of research as actual facts, and the opinions of scientists as established science.

"We ought not to represent our conjecture as a certainty, nor our hypothesis as a doctrine: this is inadmissible."

"The burden of my writing in this connection," said Prof. T., "is as much a recognition of the weakness of science as an assertion of its strength.

"If asked whether science has solved, or is likely in

our day to solve, the problem of the universe, I must shake my head in doubt. Behind and above and around us the real mystery of the universe lies unsolved, and, as far as we are concerned, is incapable of solution. The problem of the connection of body and soul is as insoluble in its modern form as it was in the pre-scientific ages.

"There ought to be a clear distinction made between science in the state of hypothesis and science in the state of fact.

"And inasmuch as it is still in its hypothetical stage, the ban of exclusion ought to fall upon the theory of evolution.

"After speaking of the theory of evolution applied to the primitive condition of matter as belonging to the dim twilight of conjecture, the certainty of experimental inquiry is here shut out.

"Those who hold the doctrine of evolution are by no means ignorant of the uncertainty of their data, and they only yield to it a provisional assent.

"In reply to your question, they will frankly admit their inability to point to any satisfactory experimental proof that life can be developed save from demonstrable antecedent life.

"I share Dr. Virchow's opinion, that the theory of evolution in its complete form involves the assumption that at some period or other of the earth's history there occurred what would now be called spontaneous generation. I agree with him that the proofs of it are still wanting."

"Religion and the Church are a part of their surroundings," remarked the Dean, as if changing the subject.

"And why," interrupted the Doctor, "do they not

harmonize their surroundings? They had all power."

"Of all the wars, sufferings, and failures in the past —if God in Heaven, consistent with their free will, could not harmonize men, the Church could not be expected to do it. The Church does all the world will let it do."

"The world," said the Doctor, "would have let the Church honor, instead of destroying, Hypatia."

"The Church did not destroy Hypatia," firmly remarked the Dean.

"You astonish me!" ejaculated the Doctor.

"So far from it," replied the Dean, "Synesius, Bishop of Ptolemais, was Hypatia's best friend and correspondent."

"Did not the monks kill her?" inquired the Doctor.

"Yes, but not because she was learned," returned the Dean. "The monks belonged to a political party at Alexandria, led by Cyril, the Bishop; and Hypatia was supposed to belong to and control the action of the other political party, led by Orestes, the Roman Prefect. The passions of the hour made both sides of these political parties demoniac."

"But monks ought to be good men," remarked the Doctor, with a quiet smile.

"A monk is a man as well as a monk," replied the Dean, "and when human passion is aroused we see the man and not the monk. The murder of Hypatia was for her politics and not for her learning."

"I am sure," said the Doctor, "you have conjectured no such excuse for the persecution of Galileo for saying that the sun was the centre of the universe instead of the earth."

Sir David Brewster remarked, "It is a curious fact

in the annals of heresy and sedition that opinions maintained with impunity by one individual have in the same age brought others to the stake or to the scaffold. The results of deep research or extravagant speculation seldom provoke hostility when meekly announced as the deductions of reason or the convictions of conscience. As the dreams of a recluse or an enthusiast, they may excite pity or call forth contempt; but like seed quietly cast into the earth, they will rot and germinate according to the vitality with which they are endowed. But if new and startling opinions are thrown in the face of the community—if they are uttered in triumph or insolence, in contempt of public opinion, or in derision of cherished errors—they lose the comeliness of truth in the rancor of their propagation; and they are like seed scattered in the hurricane, which only irritate and blind the husbandman. Had Galileo concluded his system of the world with the quiet peroration of his apologist, Campanella, and dedicated it to the Pope, it might have stood in the library of the Vatican beside the cherished, though equally heretical, volume of Copernicus. One of the most prominent trials in the character of Galileo was his invincible love of truth and his abhorrence of that spiritual despotism which had so long lorded over Europe. His views, however, were liberal, and too far in advance of his age, which he adorned; and however much we may admire the noble spirit which he evinced, and the personal sacrifices which he made in his struggle for truth, we must yet lament that in his contest with the Church of Rome, in the hotness of his zeal and the tenacity of his onset, he fell under her victorious banner; and though his cause was that of truth against superstition, yet the sympathy of Eu-

rope was not aroused by his misfortune. Under the sagacious and peaceful sway of Copernicus, astronomy had effected a glorious triumph over the dogmas of the Church, but under the bold and uncompromising sceptre of Galileo, all her conquests were irretrievably lost."

"The persecution of Galileo by the Church," said the Doctor, "was the more criminal, whatever his impetuosity, because Christianity had been in existence for fifteen hundred years and had not produced a single astronomer."

"Had science produced one?" asked the Dean. "The business of religion is to produce moral and spiritual teachers, not scientists. But out of the monasteries of those monks so offending in the eyes of some came, in the tenth century, Gobert, afterwards Pope Sylvester II., and Herman Contractus, a monk of St. Gall, Switzerland, celebrated for astronomical learning. Robert of Lorraine was made Bishop of Hereford by William the Conqueror for his knowledge of astronomy, and Robert Grostete, Bishop of Lincoln, published a treatise on the sphere. Copernicus, a monk, after fourteen centuries of scientific error, gave the truth to the world for all after-time."

"It is singular if, as you say," replied the Doctor, "the Church produced astronomers and established schools and libraries, that for a thousand years it did so little to improve the material condition of mankind. The surface of the continent of Europe was, for the most part, all this time covered with pathless forests; here and there it was dotted with monasteries and towns. In the lowlands and all along the river-courses were fens, sometimes hundreds of miles in extent, exhaling their pestiferous miasms, and spreading agues far and wide. In Paris and London

the houses were of wood daubed with clay, and thatched with straws or reeds. They had no windows, and until the invention of the saw-mill very few had wooden floors. The luxury of a carpet was unknown; some straw scattered in the room supplied its place. There were no chimneys; the smoke of the ill-fed, cheerless fire escaped through a hole in the roof. No attempt was made at drainage. Men, women, and children slept in the same apartment; not infrequently domestic animals were their companions. In such confusion of the family it was impossible that modesty or morality could be maintained. The bed was usually a bag of straw; a wooden log served as a pillow. Personal cleanliness was utterly unknown. To conceal impurity, perfumes were necessarily and profusely used. The streets were without lamps or pavement.* Why did not religion improve human condition?"

"Why," replied the Dean, "did not science do it? Mankind, whether in science or religion, does but one thing at a time. The dominant activity of the five hundred years before Christ and the thousand years after, was war. There were the two hundred and fifty years' war out of the five hundred of the Roman republic B. C.; there were the wars of the Empire; there were the ten or more persecutions of the Christians; the wars of Charlemagne, and the Crusades. Nations would fight in spite of religion. The present arts of civilization were impossible. Their era had not come."

"But," insisted the Doctor, "however powerless religion was in the practical arts, certainly no such plea could be offered for its inefficiency in letters. The

* Draper: Conflict between Science and Religion, p. 264.

priests were not warriors, nor laborers ; their lives, after the rise of monasteries, were cloistered, and if they were not learned they ought to have been, and ought to have educated the people ; but the Church was as unproductive in letters as in arts."

"You know," said the Dean, in reply, "that Latin ceased to be a spoken language some time in the fifth century. In that language and in the Greek was all the learning of the past. The northern nations, out of which were formed the modern, knew neither. The new modern languages had to be formed out of the old before the literature of the old could be made known in the new. This was a thing of the centuries. There was no papyrus imported into Europe, and paper was not manufactured. There were but few books in manuscript accessible even to the clergy ; no printing press and no circulating libraries as now."

Mr. Henry Hallam * here said, that, "If it be demanded by what cause it happened that a few sparks of ancient learning survived throughout this long winter, we can only abscribe their preservation to the establishment of Christianity. Religion alone made a bridge, as it were, across the chaos, and has linked the two periods of ancient and modern civilization. It is not, however, from religion simply that we have derived this advantage, but from religion as it was modified in the dark ages. Such is the complex reciprocation of good and evil in the dispensations of Providence, that we may assert, with only an apparent paradox, that had religion been more pure it would have been less permanent, and that Christianity has been preserved by means of its corruptions. The sole hope of literature depended on the Latin

* Middle Age, ch. ix.

language; and I do not see why that should not have been lost if three circumstances in the prevailing religious systems, all of which we are justly accustomed to disapprove, had not conspired to maintain it: the papal supremacy, the monastic institutions, and the use of a Latin liturgy.* The first kept up communication between the nations of the world, and carried the Latin tongue, in which were locked up the learning of the past, to all lands; her laws were received by the bishops, her legates presided in councils, so that a common language was necessary in the Church as in diplomacy. The monasteries, amid wars and the transformation of nations, were the only cabinets of study, and the worship of the liturgy made the Latin sacred, and preserved the language and its precious literature."

3. *Bible Criticised.—Ingersoll.*

The host here turned to Col. Ingersoll and said to him, "I dissent from what the papers make you say about the Bible and the domestic relations, especially about woman."

"There is not one word," said Col. Ingersoll, "about woman in the Old Testament, except the word of shame and humiliation. The God of the Bible does not think woman is as good as man. She was never worth mentioning. If there is any God in the universe who thinks more of me than he does of my wife, he is not well acquainted with both of us."

"I quite agree with you," remarked an English gentleman present. "I have never had the pleasure of meeting with your wife, but there must be, as you say, a difference between you. You see that it is not

* Hallam, Ib.

every man that God thinks better or stronger than woman."

"The gentleman assails," said Rev. Dr. N. S. Richardson, "the Bible as encouraging concubinage and polygamy. His charges are misleading. The patriarchs had no Bible. The Bible only records what they did. Concubinage and polygamy amid the sparse population of those times were universal. The Mosaical laws were based on this established usage. To prevent greater social wrongs, it permitted under very severe restrictions that which it could not prevent. The motives leading to these evils were then of a lofty nature. There were reasons for both that do not exist to-day. The concubine was not a mistress, but a betrothed and secondary wife, with well-protected legal rights. But the New Testament dispensation, overshadowing the Old in its claims on our faith and practice, classes these social evils as fornication and adultery. John the Baptist lost his life for assailing them in a royal palace. Amid surrounding polygamy Paul says of the marital relations of a minister: 'Let a Bishop be the husband of *one wife*.' Wherever the Bible has become the standard of morals these evils have gradually disappeared. Christianity has been the pioneer of monogamy throughout the world. To find legalized concubinage and polygamy to-day, the gentleman must pass out of Bible-reading provinces and enter the harems of Mohammedanism, the zananas of Hindooism, or the law-protected bagnios of Utah. The gentleman speaks of the Bible as grossly unfriendly to the rights of childhood and womanhood. Surely he cannot be sincere. What protection has childhood beyond the pale of Bible civilization? The

Greeks murdered maimed infants. Plato defended the custom, clamoring for 'the survival of the fittest.' The Carthaginians laid their youngest-born on the outstretched hands of their idol god, who dropped the wondering innocent into the fires below. Spartan legislation compelled parents to cast their sickly infants into the cavern that yawned at the base of Mount Taygetus. Roman law permitted fathers to murder their offspring at pleasure. The Norsemen gave unpromising nurslings to the wild beasts of the forests. China for ages has legalized the assassination of one-third of its infant population. In Fiji and the South Sea Islands, infanticide is incorporated into religious worship. In India, millions of children have been fed to the crocodiles of the Ganges. The Marquis of Wellesley, representing a great Christian government, with difficulty checked the alarming child-murder prevailing throughout Hindostan. The Bible the foe of childhood! Tell it to millions of Sunday-school scholars, whose faces beam with joy as they study its contents or carol its doctrines in song. Was it Moses, or was it Zoroaster, Plato, or Zeno who provided in their religious systems for the rights of children? Was it Christ, or was it Confucius, Aristotle, or Pythagoras who said, 'Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven?' Where but in the courts of Christian governments is the slaughter of bastards ranked with murder? Where but on their soil are found asylums for foundlings, orphans, and homeless little ones?

"The Bible the adversary of woman! What is the condition of woman in every nation where this book has not been scattered? In every Oriental and un-

christian province woman has ever been, and is to-day, either the beast of burden or the incarcerated slave of passion. What honor does the Zend Avesta, the Koran, the Vedas, the Shasters, or the sacred books of any heathen nation bestow on woman? Tell it to the intellectual princesses who are crowding into all the higher professions and bearing off the honors of colleges and universities. Tell it to the female leaders of the temperance crusades, before whose tears and prayers iron-hearted venders of strong drink trembled and surrendered. Tell it to the queenly authors of modern literature, and the graceful orators of the fair sex whose silvery voices are captivating cities. What the women of Christian lands are to-day, they owe to the influence of the Bible." *

Mr. Ingersoll remarked, with some asperity, that "God believed in the infamy of slavery."

The Dean asked, "Then why did God deliver the Israelites from slavery?"

Dr. Richardson replied further, "Col. Ingersoll charges the Bible with supporting slavery, concubinage, and polygamy. Such accusations are deceptive, and calculated to mislead. In patriarchal, prophetical, and apostolical times slavery was universal. Captives in war and purchased human beings were in involuntary servitude in all Oriental and civilized lands. Grecian and Roman history tell us of the rigor of slavery at Athens, Corinth, and Rome. The horrors of pagan slavery stirred early the heart of Justinian, and he struggled for its modification. The parents of Oriental lands even sold their children to the citizens along the Mediterranean. The primitive

* The Guardian, Dec. 13, 1879 (edited by Dr. Richardson).

slave trade was frightful in extent. The master held the life of the servant both absolutely and in perpetuity. Chained slaves opened the doors of Roman mansions in the days of Augustus. Countless were those who fell under the knife of the gladiator and the teeth of wild beasts in the games of the Coliseum. Roman laws knew no recognized relation between the bondman and his wife or children. Vedius Pollio fed the lampreys of his fish-ponds on gray-haired servants. It was a common usage to send old slaves to an island in the Tiber to perish.

"But the slavery of the Hebrews was of a different type. While abolition was then impracticable, and perhaps impossible, the Mosaical laws, divinely inspired, modified amazingly the evils of the system. Moses, that illustrious seer against whom Mr. Ingersoll levels in his various satires the artillery of his wit, provided for the regulation of involuntary servitude according to the ethics of religion and humanity. . . . The least objectionable type of slavery on which the sun has shone was that of the Jews. It was never perpetual. Periods of emancipation were frequent. The slave always had the right of appeal to the tribunals. His religious privileges suffered no restrictions. He could at any time, on the payment of ransom money, demand release. Human laws gave him protection. Mutilation insured his instant freedom.

"The spirit of the Bible is against oppression. It steadily presents mankind as a universal brotherhood. It swings back on their golden hinges the great doors of the temple of Freedom, and welcomes all alike to 'life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.'

"While the Greek philosophers defended slavery

the men who have reverenced the Bible have been gradually and long marshaling agencies for its universal extinction. The Christian Church early pioneered the way for general emancipation. It excommunicated cruel masters in its periods of greatest peril. It placed Wilberforce, Dellwyn, Pitt, Clarkson, and Sharp at the front of the host who have struck perseveringly and successfully for human freedom. It influenced Alexander II. of Russia, but fifteen years ago, to abolish serfdom throughout his vast empire."*

"Recently, Her Majesty Queen Victoria," remarked the Englishman, "said to an African prince investigating the foundations of England's glory, 'The Bible is the secret of my country's greatness!'"

"Allow me to say," continued Dr. Richardson, "Christianity has given the world its schools, colleges, and universities. With but few exceptions, the men whose names are immortal in authorship have reverenced the Bible. The libraries of the world groan under the literary work of Christian men. The antagonists of the Bible who have been moderately conspicuous for knowledge are comparatively few in number. Their works would hardly fill a cabinet bookcase. Their volumes lie as untouched on the shelves of the world's literary museums as the bones of the dead in the niches of the catacombs. To count the men of learning the plume of whose glory has been their faith in Christ and the Bible would tax an angel's patience. It is in those countries where the Bible is studied that art, science, and learning make recognized progress. A long line of poets, philosophers, historians, linguists, statesmen, scientists, and other distinguished men have bequeathed to us their

* The Guardian, Ib.

exalted estimates of the Bible. Even Napoleon has written: 'The loftiest intellects since the advent of Christianity have had a practical faith in the mysteries and doctrines of the Gospel.' The innumerable and eloquent tributes of hundreds of finely educated ministers as to the worth of the Bible we can afford to lay aside amid the wealth of eulogiums given by men of learning who have never stood in the pulpit."

Sir William Jones, bowing toward the host, remarked, "I am of opinion that the Bible contains more true sensibility, more exquisite beauty, more pure morality, more important history, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever age or language they may be written."

John Locke also added the opinion that, "In morality there are books enough written, both by ancient and modern philosophers, but the morality of the Gospel doth so exceed them all that to give a man a full knowledge of true morality I shall send him to no other book than the New Testament."

Dr. Richardson went on, saying, "Dr. Samuel Johnson, Sir Walter Scott, John Milton, Lord Bacon, Sir Isaac Newton, Guizot, Judge Story, Daniel Webster and an innumerable company of great men have laid on the lids of this book tributes as comprehensive and passionate as those quoted. Scientists like Prof. Guyot, Hugh Miller, Sir John Herschel, Prof. Henry, J. Pye Smith, Sir David Brewster, Prof. Mason, Dr. Pritchard and others eminent in the department of astronomy, geology and other sciences have honored the contents of this peerless book. Poets such as Scott, Pollok, Young, Dryden, Cowper and many of

their compeers in song have poured out in verse their affection for the Bible. Even avowed skeptics, such as Diderot, of France, Edward Gibbon and Theodore Parker, have written paragraphs that are preserved as encomiums of the Scriptures."

The host said that Rousseau paid to God's Word this panegyric: "Peruse the works of philosophers, with all their pomp and diction—how contemptible are they compared with the Scriptures! The majesty of the Scriptures strikes me with admiration."

"And yet," said Dr. Richardson, "on this book the oracles of science, the sages of philosophy, the crowned kings in varied erudition, and the vast congress of the world's *literati* have piled their eulogies until they have seemed to kiss the clouds. This is the volume that has been represented as encircling the portrait of a bloodthirsty God, as requiring human faith in a multitude of absurdities, as unworthy, because of its immorality, to have a place in the public schools, and as the chief enemy of progress in culture, civilization and liberty. But reason and history assert that the world needed an inspired and written revelation from God. What did reason and nature teach concerning God's attributes, human duty, the way of salvation and human destiny? Go back to the golden age of civilization. What did Pericles and Augustus, Cicero and Homer, Thucydides and Tacitus know concerning such subjects as the resurrection of the dead, the immortality of the soul and eternal rewards and punishments?"

Some one answered, "Their systems abounded with abominations. Their altars smoked amid debauchery and licentiousness. Rome and Greece in their highest refinement were the theatres of nameless and

unrestricted iniquities. Only occasionally some splendid man, like Socrates, would stand out morally superior to his surroundings, as some truant star beaming in solitude from a sky of otherwise unbroken blackness. Egypt, claiming to be the intellectual teacher of the world, worshipped oxen, reptiles and birds. Phœnicia, Persia and Syria constantly offered human sacrifices to inanimate deities. The Druid priests of Great Britain bathed their knives in human hearts in worship. Even in a recent century the monarchs of Mexico offered annually twenty thousand stalwart men to the sun, under the dripping knife. The world, outside of Palestine, was sunk in crime and environed with moral gloom. No pagan system could free men from sensualism."

"Then," replied Dr. Richardson, "God inspired holy men to communicate His will and to write 'as they were moved by *the Holy Ghost.*' The Divine Spirit overshadowed the thought and guided the pens of the authors of the sacred books from Moses to John. They held the trumpets through which God has spoken to the nations. For eighteen centuries the best-educated men have accepted this volume as containing the 'Oracles of God.' The substantial agreement of fourteen hundred manuscript copies of the New Testament assures us that the mistakes of transcribers have not materially impaired the sense of the original writers. The fifty-four learned men who gave us our version of the Bible were masters in Hebrew learning and Greek literature. Because Greece claimed to have a sentence received from heaven, she gilded it in gratitude on the front of her finest temple. From Genesis to Revelation we have an *infallible, inspired Book.* 'The grass withereth and

the flower thereof falleth away, but the Word of our God shall stand forever.' But some gentlemen can discern no reason why the lost and mapless mariners on the sea of Time needed this chart; why mankind wanted this sun on their benighted sky; why the impoverished race desired this inexhaustible mine of wealth."*

During these remarks of Dr. Richardson our host kept his eye on Col. I., who sat near the speaker. He was all ready, when the Doctor stopped, to enter warmly into the lists. Bowing toward the host, he said, "I regret to differ in opinion from our distinguished visitor; but to me no book of all books is more objectionable for school or any other use. The advance of civilization requires that the Church shall stand aside forever, and let reason finally rule the world. Secularize education and it will advance, but not without."

"I have always," mildly replied Professor Huxley, "been strongly in favor of secular education, in the sense of education without theology. But I must confess I have been no less seriously perplexed to know by what practical measures the religious feeling, which is the essential basis of conduct, was to be kept up, in the present utterly chaotic state of opinion on these matters, without the use of the Bible. The Pagan moralists lack life and color, and even the noble stoic Marcus Antoninus is too high and refined for an ordinary child." †

"And could you reject the refined words of that great stoic," said Mr. Ingersoll, "and put in the hands of a child the horrible, indecent stories of the Bible?"

* a *Ib.*

† Ib. 51.

"Still," replied the Professor, "take the Bible as a whole, make the severest deductions which fair criticism can dictate for shortcomings and positive errors, eliminate, as a sensible lay-teacher would do if left to himself, all that is not desirable for children to occupy themselves with, and there still remains in this old literature a vast residuum of moral beauty and grandeur. And then consider the great historical fact that for three centuries this book has been woven into the life of all that is best and noblest in English history; that it has become the national epic of Britain, and is as familiar to noble and simple, from John-o'-Groat's House to Land's End, as Dante and Tasso once were to the Italians; that it is written in the noblest and purest English, and abounds in exquisite beauties of mere literary form; and finally, that it forbids the veriest hind who never left his village to be ignorant of the existence of other countries and other civilizations, and of a great past, stretching back to the furthest limits of the oldest nations in the world. By the study of what other book could children be so much humanized and made to feel that each figure in the vast historical procession fills, like themselves, but a momentary space in the interval of two extremities, and earns the blessings or the curses of all time according to its efforts to do good or hate evil, even as they also are earning their payment for their work?" *

For a moment there was silence up and down the table after such emphatic and eloquent words for the Bible. But Colonel Ingersoll was not done. It was not exactly the company for his peculiar style of talk and choice of words, and especially as they were

* Critiques and Address, p. 51.

mindful of what three thousand years had held in reverence. But he was irrepressible, and said:

"Still, where this Bible has been, man has hated his brother—there have been dungeons, racks, thumbscrews and the sword." *

"Yes," said the Dean, "and there have been floods and famines, and droughts and conflagrations, and profanities and frauds; but did the Bible cause all that happened after it was given to the world? Can any one say that the injustice and cruelties and impurities of the world are taught and commanded in the Bible? Can the teachings of a book be so horrible that says, 'Love your enemies; be merciful, as your Father in heaven is merciful; be pitiful; be courteous; honor all men; blessed are the poor?'"

4. *Sociological Drift.*

(*a*) *A Morality of Philosophy without Religion.*

"What do you think, Sir James Stephen," asked the host, "of the assumed antagonism between theology and morality? Many persons, you know, regard everything which tends to discredit theology with disapprobation, because they think that all such speculations must endanger morality as well. Others assert that morality has a basis of its own in human nature, and that even if all theological belief were exploded morality would remain unaffected."

"My own view," answered Sir James Stephen, "is that each part is to a considerable extent right, but that the true practical inference is often neglected. Understanding by the theology of an age or country the theory of the universe generally accepted then and there, and by its morality the rules of life then and there commonly regarded as binding, it seems to

* Ingersoll: Mistakes of Moses, p. 15.

me extravagant to say that the one does not influence the other. A vast majority of people believe that the course of the world is ordered by a good God, that right and wrong are in the nature of a divine law, and that this world is a place of trial, and part only of a wider existence; and we may call this belief theology. On the other hand, it seems at least equally evident that morality has a basis of its own quite independent of all theology whatever. It is difficult to imagine any doctrine about theology which has not prevailed at some time or place; but no one ever heard of men living together without some rules of life—that is, without some sort of morality."

"But," said the Dean, "was not that morality the practical side of the prevailing theology? Morality is life among men. Religion (theology) is life toward God, and both are as much one as is the inside and outside of any kind of seed, or the concavity and convexity of a curved line, and to destroy either is to destroy both."

"I admit," said Sir James, "that the destruction of religion would involve a moral revolution; but it would no more destroy morality than a political revolution would destroy law. It would substitute one set of moral rules and sentiments for another, just as the establishment of Christianity and Mohammedanism did when they superseded various forms of Paganism."

"Your admission," remarked the Dean, "seems to refute your theory. Substitution is, practically, the destruction of the thing substituted. If, by a destruction of religion, you bring in a set of moral rules not based on religion, do you not destroy those moral rules that were so based?"

"I do not think," interposed Mr. Martineau, "that the form and contents of a moral system would be essentially modified by the decline of religious belief. It may, no doubt, happen that particular problems of conduct, as in the case of suicide and marriage, have become the subject of ecclesiastical legislation, and so have passed into preoccupation of religious feeling, and on the disappearance of that feeling may be flung back into an indeterminate condition. But to the real solution of such problems it would be difficult to show that religion contributes any new elements, so as to twine that into duty that was not duty before."

"Is not that a *petitio principii?*" respectfully inquired the Dean. "The question to be proved is, What is the basis of morality? If religion, then with the decay of religion the duties it supports would decay. If wrongs are *mala in se*, why are they so? The nature of things, Mr. Spencer has said in his 'Data of Ethics.' But *whence* the *nature* of things? How are we to know it? Is it the will of God revealed to us in the Bible, or in our moral sense, or in experience, or by all these? Is its origin natural or supernatural?"

"The moral sense, adjudicating and proclaiming moral rules," remarked Professor Clifford, "is the accumulated instinct of the race, poured into and overflowing us as if the ocean were poured into a cup. The spring of virtuous action is the social instinct. which is set to work by the practice of comradeship, Virtue is a habit, not a sentiment or an ism. I neither admit the moral influence of theism in the past nor look forward to the moral influence of humanism in the future."

"What is your opinion, Professor Robertson?" inquired the host.

"As to morality, you seem to hold to Mr. Locke's *tabula rasa* theory," was the response; "but is there not an element or factor in the individual's knowledge that is there before, or, at all events, apart from that which happens to come to him by way of ordinary experience? This other element or factor is now most commonly represented as an inheritance that each human being brings into life with him. We are to understand that a human child being what he is—the offspring of particular parents, of a particular nation, of a particular race, born at a particular stage in the race's development—does know and feel and will otherwise than he would if all or any of these circumstances were different. I cannot doubt that human beings are determined by inherited constitutions, mental or nervous, or mental *and* nervous, to interpret and order their incidental experience in a certain common fashion; in other words, that the way of men's knowing is prescribed for them by ancestral conditions. Original endowment is everything, and man's life-experience little or nothing, toward the sum of his knowledge. The latest phase of modern philosophic thought, then, becomes hardly distinguishable from the high speculative doctrine of Leibitz—that in knowledge there is, properly speaking, no acquisition at all, but every mind (or monad) simply develops into activity all the potency within it: not really affected by or affecting any other mind or thing. It is no exaggeration to say that the tendency of recent evolutionism in psychology is to reduce to a minimum, or even crush out, the influence of incidental experience as a factor in the development of the individual knowledge. What can happen to the individual in his little life seems to be so mere a trifle

by the side of all that has happened *for* him through the ages. The race is a solidarity from which the individual man is never separable. Humanity is an organism, and heredity continues the past into the present and future."*

"Heredity recognizes individuality," said the Dean, "but this organic humanism of which you speak never emancipates the individual, any more than the tree emancipates the limb. Humanity becomes one ever-growing personality, with an ever-accumulating experience and intelligence, with an ever-continuous history, each identical with the whole, and the whole as incomplete without each as the arch without each voussoir. Thus, evolution compels humanity ever to be more humanity, and immortal humanity. But in dropping individuality, you drop responsibility, and so all morality. But Paul said to the Romans,† 'Every one of us shall give account of himself to God.' So that the question of moral accountability brings us again face to face with theology."

"False theology," remarked Sir James Stephen, "cannot give a good morality."

"That is an admission," replied the Dean, "that theology affects morality, and a true theology would affect morality."

"I do not see how that can be denied," interrupted Lord Selborne. "Morality has not flourished among either civilized or uncivilized men when religious belief has been generally lost or utterly debased. Nothing worse can be conceived than the morality of

* See Prof. Croom Robertson's essay, How We Come by Our Knowledge. C, May, 1873. The Nineteenth Century.

†(Ch. xiv. 12.)

the Greeks and Romans at the height of their civilization, when religion was dead."

"To assert," remarked Mr. Frederic Harrison, with due deference to the opinion just expressed, "that there is no morality but what is based on theology, is to assert what experience, history and philosophy flatly contradict. History teaches us that some of the best types of morality, in men and in races, have been found apart from anything that Christians can call theology at all. Morality has been advancing for centuries in modern Europe, while theology, at least in authority, has been visibly declining."

"This would seem to show," said Lord Selborne, "the morality that advanced with the impetus given to it by religion must recede when religion declines and that impetus is no longer felt. It was so in Rome. The morality of the Romans in the old republican times when they knew nothing of Greek philosophy was praised by Polybius, who connected it directly and emphatically with the influence among them of religious belief. After their intellectual cultivation had taken its tone from the irreligious or agnostic materialism of Epicurus, then morality became what is described in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans and in the satires of Juvenal."

"But the morality of Confucius and of Sakya Mouni," responded Mr. Harrison, "of Socrates and Marcus Aurelius, of Turgot, Condorcet and Hume, was entirely independent of theology. The moral system of Aristotle was framed without any view to theology, as completely as that of Comte or of our recent moralists."

Mr. Froude interposed, "The difficulty of conduct does not lie in knowing what it is right to do, but in

doing it when known. Intellectual culture does not touch the conscience. It provides no motives to overcome the weakness of the will, and with wider knowledge it brings also new temptations. The sense of duty is present in each detail of life ; the obligatory 'must' which binds the will to the course which right principle has marked out for it produces a fibre like the fibre of the oak. The educated Greeks knew little of it. They had courage and genius and enthusiasm, but they had no horror of immorality as such. The Stoics saw what was wanting, and tried to supply it; but though they could provide a theory of action, they could not make the theory into a reality." *

"It is not moral knowledge man so much needs as he needs moral power," remarked the Dean.

"How far," inquired the Dean, "is one age independent of preceding ages? Faith is older than philosophy. The religions of the world have pioneered the way for moral systems."

"I cannot admit that," said Mr. Frothingham,† "morals, in the order of time and the order of thought, preceded religion. Religion reflected the moral sentiment of man, whatever that might happen to be, and changed as the moral sentiment improved, or the reverse. As the standard of morality has incessantly improved as the principles of morality gradually became understood and established, religion took on new forms and assumed a more beautiful expression."

"And yet," said the Dean, "excuse me for quoting your own word, so well expressed when you say,‡

* Froude's Cæsar, p. 12.

† Visions of the Future, p. 78.

‡ Ib.

'There was a time when religion had society all to itself; because feelings, hopes, fears, anticipations, come first. Long before men think, study, reason, compare, adjust their ideas, understand themselves, they feel intensely. Their dread of supernatural power is fearful; their hope of blessedness to come to them from a source outside of their lives takes up all the feelings that their hearts can entertain. Thus, religion gets established, organized, recognized, long before morals can come into the field. Hence we see how it is that religion dictates morality.' I admit that you also said that, 'Although in the first instance it may have reflected the moral condition such as it was, yet, having possession of the ground, it dictates what the moral principles and feelings of men shall be, and so prevents them from becoming what they would naturally be.' I quote this," continued the preacher, "to show how thoroughly religion inspires, molds and originates moral feeling and action."

"The influence of religion upon the present morality of the world," said Mr. Frothingham, "cannot be overstated. Imagine religion instituted, and by religion instituted I mean accepted, recognized, built with form, organized, administered by priest. Imagine this thing going on for thousands of years, as Christianity, for instance, has done, so as to become a religion, an accepted practical system, with its priesthood, its churches, its altars, its sacraments, its creeds, its sacred books, its holy customs, covering the surface of Europe. For ages it has presided over the whole of life. Generations have been born into it, have been reared by it. It has held control of the great universities, the centres of light in Italy, France, England, Germany. It has presided over the acad-

emies of higher education. It has had its ministers in the bosom of every family. It has controlled the nursery, the primary school. It has written the school book. Wherever young people met for instruction, religion has been on the spot to say what the instruction should be. This is what I meant by instituted religion. It is religion made a part of existence. Nobody questions it. Nobody disregards it. So completely a matter of course is it that nobody asks a reason for its existence, or credentials for its authority. Nobody doubts its doctrines, disputes the efficacy of its sacraments, neglects its observances. Generation after generation is born, matured and buried without raising a surmise in regard to its absolute right to rule. Such is instituted religion. It is not your creed or my creed, or the creed of any company, clique or set—it is the creed of everybody, man, woman and child.

"For a thousand years Roman Catholicism was thus the faith of the Western world, as the Greek Church was the faith of the Eastern world, husbanding the sacred sentiments of the people. All the great philosophers were Romanists. The scientific men were believers in the Church. Everybody, high and low, strong and weak, rich and poor, wise and foolish—everybody without exception, without hesitation, without compulsion, recognized the binding authority of religion over the whole of life.

"Of course, a system of morals followed more complete, more exact, more rigid, than had been known before. I say 'of course.' The object of religion has, we must bear in mind, been to make people happy hereafter. How was it to do this? In order to guarantee happiness hereafter, it was necessary

that people who professed the religion should be members of the Church, should be constant at the sacraments, should avail themselves of the ministrations of the priest ; for saving power came from above, from outside, from supernatural sources. Hence, certain moral precepts must be accepted, certain books must be read, certain books must be avoided, a certain routine of conduct must be gone over. Religion, therefore, had its prescribed formularies for every act and experience of life. The ministers of religion were in every house, telling the parent how to rear the child, telling the teacher what the child should study, telling the thinker what to think, the student what to learn, the critic what to blame or praise.

"We see the system working its way in until it occupies every field of human life—the departments of sentiment, emotion, conscience; regulating the emotions of hope and fear; standing guard at all the avenues of the intellectual, sentimental and moral world. Here is a system of morals." *

"I think it evident," said Sir James Stephen, "that the destruction of religion would involve a moral revolution ; but it would no more destroy morality than a political revolution destroys law. It would substitute one set of moral rules and sentiments for another, just as the establishment of Christianity and Mohammedanism did when they superseded various forms of Paganism."

"But such a revolution," remarked the Dean, "is not a pleasant thing to contemplate. It would give us

* Frothingham: Visions of the Future, pp. 8–12.

"(b) *The Morality of what Comte calls a Religion without a God.*"

Mr. Mill said: "Comte called this the Religion of Humanity. So far as it is a religion, is it to die with all other religions? As it looks to a morality without religion, it is, as to conduct, practical Atheism.* If this could be called a religion at all, the question is not whether it will end, but can it ever begin? Can a right conduct ever begin without a right power? and the power of action is not logic, but feeling. Power is derived, not inherent. Matter acquires gravitation directly as to mass and inversely as to distance. Moral ends are reached by acquired power, operating on our natural faculties, involution energizing evolution. Positivism, ignoring the courses of things and their destiny, and, of course, the being of God, simply studies the laws of the universe. But what is the cause or who is the giver of law? This question Positivism does not discuss. Its rules of moral conduct are sought in the light of *experience* only, and not in the *will* of any Supreme Being."

"The word *Law*," said Professor Blackie,† "is the last term with those who disdain to use the name of God as the underlying reasonable cause of the grand order of the Universe. But this word, however fashionable, is utterly void of philosophical significance. A law is simply a regular method of operation, and implies either an internal or external causal Force, whose constant and consistent action produces that method of operation. The motion of a piston in a steam-engine proceeds according to a law; but no sane

* Mill's Comte, pp. 121–133.

† Nat. Hist. Atheism, p. 244.

man could dream of substituting that expression of regularity in the movement for the true cause of the movement. The cause of the law in this case is the nature of steam and the designing mind of James Watt. So with everything else : the men on a chess-board, the balls on a billiard-table, the soldiers in an ordered battle, move according to a law ; but to substitute that law for the cause of these motions would not be claimed. The cause of the motion is a motive force ; and the cause of all reasonable motion, or motion according to law, is a reasonable motive force. And in this way the cause of the laws of Nature, which we are called upon to substitute for God, is the Supreme designing Reason or reasonable Force which we call God. The self-existent divine reason controlling the physical world we call the laws of Nature, and the same Reason controlling the moral world we call the principles of right conduct. Fundamentally, both are one: deny the radical unity of the laws of Nature in the Divine Being and you can have no reason to admit a controlling unity of reasonable plan in a well-ordered life or a well-governed state." *

"It is the aim of Positivism," said one of the party, "and of the moral education which it designs, to bring the doctrine of the social organism, and of the organic relations of human beings, more and more vividly into the consciousness of mankind. Well aware of the feebleness of the sympathetic instincts, it attributes to their lack of development or to their systematic perversion, a large part of the miseries and inadequacies and disappointments which at present darken human life. It proposes, therefore, to develop such sentiments

* Ib. 44.

by every practicable means. It addresses those who are capable of speculation with the true philosophy of the doctrine, and confides to them the task of continually expounding and exploring it; of enforcing it by exhortation and illustration, by principle and precept. Thus, to the priests of Catholicism, Positivism opposes the philosophers. Over those unable to really understand ideas, it extends the influence of feelings, emotions, sentiments generated by ideas."*

"Remembering this," interposed Dr. F., "religion, in all ages, has preached compassion, sympathy, fellow-feeling, piety, tenderness. It has told the great that they were great in order that they might help the small. It has bidden the rich to bear in mind their stewardship, to remember that they were rich in order to bless the poor. It has urged on the wise the lesson of service to the simple, reminding them that as the poor and toiling labor that they may have bread, they should in return give light, life and immortality.†

"And yet the spheres of morality and religion are quite distinct," continued Dr. Frothingham. "Morality aims to produce a perfect society; religion aims at building up the family in heaven. Morality aims at making men happy, sympathetic, just, kind; religion aims at making men safe in the hereafter. The object of religion— taking the interpretation of it by Christianity, Bhuddism, Brahmanism, or any of the old-world faiths, is to reconcile men with God, not with each other."‡

* The Value of Life, a reply to Is Life Worth Living? p. 206.

† Frothingham: Visions of the Future, p. 156.

‡ Frothingham: Visions of the Future, p. 54.

The Dean replied, "The Master said, 'Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment, But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way: first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.' * In brief, my dear Dr. Frothingham, does morality teach a single rule of conduct that it did not get, either in principle or form, from religion?"

"That," interposed Rev. Dr. Martineau, "is only an inverse method of saying that Christian ethics are true to human life and the expression of right reason.† I admit that though the decay of religion may leave the institutes of morality intact, it draws off their inward power. The devout faith of men expresses and measures the intensity of their moral nature, and it cannot be lost without a remission of enthusiasm, and under this low pressure, the successful re-entrance of importunate desires and clamorous passions which had been driven back. To believe in an ever-living and perfect Mind, supreme over the universe, is to invest moral distinctions with immensity and eternity, and lift them from the provincial stage of human society to the imperishable theatre of all being. When planted thus in the very substance

* Matthew x. 21–24.

† April number Nineteenth Century, 1877.

of things, they justify and support the ideal estimate of the conscience; they deepen every guilty shame; they guarantee every righteous hope; and they help the will with a divine casting vote in every balance of temptation. The sanctity thus given to the claims of duty, and the interest that gathers around the play of character, appear to me more important elements in the power of religion than its direct sanctions of hope and fear. Yet to these, also, it is hardly possible to deny great weight, not only as extending the range of personal interests, but as the answer of reality to the retributor's verdict of the moral sense. Cancel these beliefs, and morality will be left reasonable, but paralyzed; possible to temperaments comparatively passionless, but with no grasp on vehement and poetic natures; and gravitating toward the simply prudential wherever it maintains its ground. Historical experience appears to confirm this estimate. In no race (notwithstanding conspicuous individual exceptions) have the excesses of sensual passion been so kept in check as among the Jews. There is no more striking feature in their literature during the moral declension of Greek and Roman society (e. g., in the Sibyline Oracle) than the horror which it expresses of the pervading dissoluteness of the Pagan world. It certainly cannot be said that the problem was rendered easy by the coolness of the Jewish temperament. The phenomena of Christendom presents a more complicated tissue. But a just analysis yields, I believe, the same result, and attests the force of religious conviction as the only successful antagonist, on any large scale, of the animal impulses. True it is, that in the very presence of the Church, and even among its representatives, gross vices have at times prevailed. But

these have been hollow times, in which, with large classes of persons, the outer shell of religion sheltered insincere life, and the private habits betrayed the inward disintegration which policy or indifference concealed." *

"Are we to understand," inquired the host, "that civilization may go down in the very presence of religion?"

"Not in its presence, but in its absence. To test the power of religion," continued Rev. Dr. M, "we must limit ourselves to cases where that power is not effete. In the Puritan families of the seventeenth century, among the present Catholic peasantry of Ireland, throughout the Society of Friends, and in the Wesleyan classes, it can hardly be denied that the control of irregular desires has been attained with an exceptional ease and completeness."

"Man wants," said Mr. Harrison, "a morality discoverable alone by observation and experience, uninfluenced by faith in the supernatural."

"Christians," replied the Dean, "teach a morality with both sanctions. Their revealed morality is practical, and their practical morality is revealed. Where the mere moralist has much, the Christian moralist has more. His religion is moral, and his morality is religion. But the effort to divorce morality from religion is nothing new. In every age and community there are moral individuals who ignore religion while they are instructed by it. The rationalistic skeptic forgets that he was once a believing child. The teachings of a religious mother live on in the unbelieving man. The great religious pressure of the world without controls the life that thinks itself

* Ib.

governed exclusively by its own force of reason from within. Morality apart from religion has ever disastrously failed. But two instances are remembered where the separation was complete. In the one, at the fall of the Roman Republic, religion being entirely exhausted, expired, and Cæsar came ; in the other, as at the rise of the French Republic, religion was only excluded to be restored by Napoleon. In either case, the moral chaos was horrible. Thus, morality is ever the child of religion."

"Much of this is certainly true," said Dr. Frothingham. "Consider the practical effect of the great doctrine of all instituted religion, upon the moral disposition of men ; for instance, *the doctrine of a personal God.* And by a personal God I do not mean an infinite intelligence, will, force, 'a stream of tendency,' a 'Power outside of ourselves working for righteousness.' I mean an individual being watching over the world, in whole and in part, overlooking and ordering every individual life, appointing each particular lot, adjusting every detail of fortune, counting the tears, numbering the disappointments of every one, balancing evil against good, harm against benefit, joy against sorrow, educating men, training them with patient providence and assigning every incident in a varied experience by his discerning will and for his supreme purpose. Think of such an idea as this holding possession of the intellectual and spiritual world, say for a thousand years, nobody doubting it, nobody repelling it, everybody, old and young, giving to it an implicit, explicit and familiar faith, growing up and working themselves into it !

"What is, what must be, the consequence ? Certainly a state of mind, feeling, will, altogether pecul-

iar. Suppose that each one of us firmly and absolutely believed, without the least misgiving or qualification, that a being such as I have described, infinitely wiser, better, more far-seeing, more forecasting than he, had the charge of his particular destiny—some guardian angel, some eternal spirit, accompanying him in every point of his career, doing everything that happened to him, undoing everything that was in the nature of mishap to him, sending calamity, loss, disaster, bereavement: if he were stretched upon the bed of sickness, stretching him there with definite intention; if he were raised up, raising him up for a purpose; in all respects administering every part and particle of private experience—think, I say, of the power of such a belief as that! Believing this, one would accept his faith without a question, without a murmur. Is he poor, he must bless his poverty. Is he ignorant, simple, he must be glad that he is not in the company of the wise. Is he cast down, trodden under the foot of men, persecuted, oppressed, this is his privilege. It is a sin to find fault that this being takes the pains to chasten, to educate, to discipline, to lead him on. Blessed be poverty! Blessed be pain, sickness, suffering, toil! Blessed be a lonely and miserable lot! Blessed are the poor. Blessed are the meek. Blessed are the hungry and thirsty. Blessed are they that are persecuted. Blessed are they of whom all men speak ill, for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. Through suffering men are made perfect. Submit and acquiesce. Be grateful for the cross; bow to the rod; take your lot. No matter whether it seems in the eyes of men desirable or not, you know nothing about that. How can you, short-sighted, undertake to pronounce upon it? Accept it

as the appointment of a being perfectly wise and just and good. If life is rich, be grateful that it is so. But be careful not to be overweening in your vanity or puffed up in your self-esteem. Do not think too highly of yourself, for if you do it will be all taken away. Such is the moral inference from a belief like this. The ministers of religion repress murmurs and skepticism. The Church thunders its denunciation against those who would change the established situation, pervert the order of things. A type of moral sentiment is fostered the characteristic of which is the abnegation of self, the complete resignation of the person in favor of the Supreme Will."

"Disputes about a name are idle," interposed Mr. Harrison. "If we can be debarred the use of the name of Religion, no one can disinherit us of the thing. We mean by religion a scheme which shall explain to us the relations of the faculties of the human soul within, of man to his fellow-man beside him, to the world and its order around him; next, that which brings him face to face with a power to which he must bow, with a Providence which he must love and serve, with a Being which he must adore—that which, in fine, gives a doctrine to believe, a discipline to live by, and an object to worship. This is the ancient meaning of religion, and the fact of religion all over the world in every age. What is new in our scheme, who follow the teaching of Comte, is merely that we avoid such terms as Infinite, Absolute, Immaterial, and vague negatives altogether, resolutely confining ourselves to the sphere of what can be shown by experience, of what is relative and not absolute, and wholly and frankly human." *

* Symposium, the Nineteenth Century, April, 1879.

"Whether religion will die or not," said the Dean, "depends altogether upon the probability of the cultivated mind becoming only atheistic."

"As to that," remarked Mr. Frothingham, "we need not fear; for about a century ago, in France and elsewhere in Europe, the belief in God seemed passing away. The very name of God was spoken in derision, as a word that was no longer powerful to conjure by. A philosopher declined an article on God for his encyclopædia, saying the question of God had no significance. He who professed belief in God was blackballed at the clubs. A distinguished philosopher—I think it was Hume—remarking in a philosophical company in Paris that he never saw an atheist, and did not believe that there was one, a gentleman replied, 'Well, you may have that pleasure now. Every man here is an atheist.' In fact, for a brief period the belief in God had lost its hold in cultivated minds; Materialism had the argument. But since then the ancient conviction has been taking heart, and has steadily pushed its antagonist to the wall. And this in the face of physical science, which has in these latter days attained prodigious growth, and has been sweeping gods and demi-gods out of the world as the house-maid sweeps chips and cobwebs from a parlor. Definitions of God have been vanishing, idols have been trembling, symbols have been fading away, trinities have been dissolving, personalities have been waning and losing themselves in light or in shadow; but the Being has been steadily coming forward from the background, looming up from the abysses, and occupying the vacant spaces, flowing into dry channels, and taking possession of

every inch of matter and mind. The mystery of it deepens, but the conviction of it deepens also."*

"From the polytheistic religion of the worship of ancestors," said the Dean, "with morality, and the polytheistic religion of the worship of the elements as deities, without morality, the next logical step is to an atheistical religion of morality without worship. This religion, if such it can be called, is either personal or what man should be in himself, as taught by Socrates: or impersonal, as in the Fatalism taught by Zeno, or the humanistic morality of law, or what each man should be to all others, as taught in the Positivism of Comte. I do not say that these men were atheists, but only that they taught a morality as divorced from theology."

"The avowed atheist," rejoined Dr. F., "for there are such, finds it harder to put his creed into words and to adjust it to the human mind than ever Athanasius did to define his doctrine of Trinity. You cannot push him into a corner; you cannot make him avow his unbelief in unqualified terms; you cannot compel him to back out of the region of confessed divinity. He retires beyond the reach of definition, but not beyond the reach of thought. Comte says, 'The principle of theology is to explain everything by supernatural wills. That principle can never be set aside until we acknowledge the search for *causes* to be beyond our reach, and limit ourselves to the knowledge of *laws*. The universal religion adopts as its fundamental dogma the fact of the existence of an order which admits of no variation, and to which all events of every kind are subject. That there is such

* Frothingham: Religion of Humanity, p. 37.

an order can be shown as a fact, but it cannot be explained.' "*

"No one will dispute the statement of M. Comte," said Dr. Bushnell, "as to the laws of matter. But what is law? 'The laws of nature cannot account for their own origin.' † The word is used with many varieties of meaning, but always, and in all its varieties, having one element that is constant, viz., the opinion had of its uniformity; as that, in exactly the same circumstances, it will always and forever do, bring to pass, direct or command precisely the same thing. Without this, no law, so called, is regarded as law. Observing this fundamental fact, we notice the distinction between natural and moral law. Natural law is the law by which any being or thing is made to act invariably thus or thus, in virtue of terms inherent in itself; as when any body of matter gravitates by reason of its matter, and according to the quantity of its matter. Moral law pertains never to a thing, nor to any substance in the choice of cause and effect, but only to a free intelligence, or self-active power. Its rule is authority, not force. It commands, but does not actuate or determine. It speaks to assent or choice, inviting action, but operating nothing apart from choice. It imposes obligation, leaving the subject to obey or not, clear of any enforcement, save that of conviction beforehand and penalty afterward. There is a third kind of law, viz., the law of one's end, or the law which one's reason imposes in the way of obtaining this end. Thus, if a man undertake to be honest, having that for an end, then it will be seen that his end so far be-

* Frothingham: Religion of Humanity, p. 39.

† Mill's Comte, p. 15.

comes a law to all his actions; that is a law self-imposed, one which his reason prescribes, and which, in accepting his end, he freely accepts. So, if a man's end is to be rich, we shall see that his end is a law to his whole life-plan.* But who is to fix the end of life-work? If there be no future, then the end is a present one. If a present one only, is it self-fixed, or fixed by others? Is every man exclusively a law unto himself? If not, is society? And if society, what is over society? If nothing, then society is irresponsible for its life. But we see that it is responsible; for it fails with vice and succeeds with virtue, so far as its own work is concerned. If it is destroyed, it is not self-destroyed. But if nothing is law but like results from like conditions, then there is no such thing as law; for conditions are always unlike; and from unlike conditions there can be no law.

"As worship without conduct expires," continued Dr. Bushnell, "as seen in the ancient religion, so the attempt at conduct without worship will, now as then, lead to social and political revolution.

"Each successive skeptical system claims to have discovered, and be inspired by, some new principle needed to reform and direct the moral movements of the world; is there a single valuable truth found in any one of these schemes opposed to Christianity which Christianity itself does not include in a form better far? The authors of these systems, either ignorant of the forms of Christianity, and, consciously or unconsciously, borrowing some one of its many and divine principles, separate it from its place in Christ's great system of truth, and present it as of exclusive

* Bushnell on Nature and Supernature, p. 263.

importance, and as a principle new with skepticism, and therefore opposed to Christianity.

"The adherents of this religion of Humanity are sometimes practical men, monopolized by their business, honest from commercial principle or policy, prudent in speech and circumspect in action. They claim to be moral rather than religious. They stake their chances for eternity upon their respectability in time. But while they themselves rely upon their morality, many, if not most, of them would prefer that their families take their chances upon religion. They feel that their sons, especially, are safer, certainly for this world, in the Church than out of it.

"But there is another class of mind, bewildered by speculation as to efficient and final causes of things, who turn from a faith in God to what they call a knowledge of man, and rest their all on that. They mainly adhere to the Positive philosophy originated by Hume but emphasized by Comte. It is called *positive* because it rests on the *positive discoveries* of science and *negatives* the *speculations* of all other systems.

"In the positive state of science, the human mind, acknowledging the impossibility of obtaining absolute knowledge, abandons the search after the origin and destination of the universe and the knowledge of the secret causes of phenomena. All in this scheme is temporal and human, and nothing divine and eternal. Instead of looking for humanity to aspire godward, it is silent as to the very being of God, and turns its worship to Humanity. As we have said, its religion is called the Religion of Humanity. But what sort of religion is that?"

"The order of the sciences," said the host, "as

stated to us by these Positivists, builds a philosophy that binds the Cosmos into one intelligible whole, lying around its great perceptive centre, Man. Its religious and moral base is this organic Humanity, whose good, welfare and glory become the mainspring of life and duty. The Religion of Humanity, in a word, is that religion which counts Man as the centre of the world, and solves all relations by reference to that centre. It is, therefore, the true and scientific, because the only verifiable, religion of the human race. Its fundamental maxim is 'to *know* the *true* in order to do the *good*.'

"It is indeed horrible to think of entirely breaking up old ideas, customs, laws, feelings, hopes and worships in order utterly to recast society upon new and untried theories of right and wrong. Think of the human race without worship! praiseless, prayerless, altarless, *without hope and without God in the world*."

"Let the consequences be what they may," said Mr. Frothingham, "if we are to have a religion that helps morality instead of hindering it, we must have a new conception of religion—a *new religion*, with new creeds, a new order of sentiments, new institutions—a religion that is fully sympathetic with man."

"What more sympathetic with man than the Christian religion?" said the Dean. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that he who believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

"That is it," replied Mr. Frothingham. "We want a religion that plants itself upon the conditions of success in this life, that bids men study their human relations—a *human* religion, in which the conception of man is substituted for the conception of God; in

145325

which duty, responsibility, obligation, shall consist not in the performance of works pleasing to an invisible being outside the world, but in the sincere effort to secure the happiness, comfort, satisfaction, elevation, enlightenment of human beings in the world where duty is actually to be done; a religion which shall lay the foundations of piety in obedience to the faculties of human nature as they are unfolded, and to social relations as they are understood, and which for new light resorts not to prophet, saint or priest, not to sacred Scripture, Old Testament or New, but to the revelations that come in the form of practical knowledge, through careful and conscientious study of the requirements and conveniences of existence in this year of the world's history. The religion of humanity, the church of humanity, this is what we are coming to; the conservative faith based on observance of the moral law, the religion of intelligence."

"Is not the Christian religion," inquired the Dean, "one of intelligence? Has it not, as you said, built up the schools, inspired literature, made the laws that have elevated woman, and preached the gospel of love to the poor? What is the creed of this new religion of humanity?"

"Its creed," replied Mr. Frothingham, "is not yet written, but it is a-making. Its sentiments are scarcely more than indicated and suggested. Its duties are slowly defining themselves. Its future is shadowy, but how immense, how glorious in vision, as it rises veiled before the eyes of those who think, feel, aspire. Give us a rational religion to meet a rational morality." *

"And after all the creeds and deeds of the past,"

* Visions of the Future, pp. 98–9.

said the Dean, "after all the hymns and prayers, after all that science knows and conjectures, have we to renounce all religious beliefs, revolutionize all the morality which they have inspired, and go back to the infancy of civilization and start afresh? Has all the progress of the past brought us to moral chaos? By the light of this religion of humanity are we to see in the past nothing but universal error? If so, is it worth lifting the veil? Upon the Nothingness of the past we can build only nothingness in the future. Can Comte and his agnostic disciples teach the world a new and better religion of Humanity than Christ and his Apostle?"

"The phrase 'Religion of Humanity,'" remarked Mr. Frothingham, "has, unfortunately, been associated with the name and philosophy of Auguste Comte, who does not deserve credit for the main ideas it stands for. If the name was of his invention the thing was not. His leading conceptions of the solidarity of mankind, of the grand man, and immortality of the race, were thrown out several years in advance of him. Comte elaborated them, but, as we believe, corrupted and perverted them; for his elaboration was artificial, consisting much less in a development of spiritual capacities than in a mechanical arrangement of outward apparatus. It was with him a manufactured system done with malice-aforethought. He found no soul in it, and put no soul into it. His spasm of sentimentality gratified itself by constructing this ambitious Mausoleum which was to take the place of the Church of Rome, but it was *church* against *church*. It was the Roman Church without its theology; St. Peter's without a saint. It is the mechanism of the old faith without the soul of the

new. The despotic character of mediæval religion was retained; the distinction between the priesthood and the laity; the distinction between the various secular orders; the subjection of woman to man; in a word, Comte's Church of Humanity was in every respect European. But this is not the time to give a critical account of Comte's scientific chimera. I have said this much of its character to show why we repudiate it, as we do, and disavow all purpose of recommending a system which seems so full of pernicious elements, and wholly at variance with the intellectual, social and spiritual tendencies of the age."

"I cannot admit," remarked Mr. Frederic Harrison, "that I fully agree with Mr. Frothingham in all that he has said. We who follow the teaching of Comte, humbly look forward to an ultimate solution of all the moral and theological difficulties by the force of one common principle. I admit with Sir James Stephen, that morality has a basis of its own, quite independent of theology, yet deeply affected by it and destroyed by it if the theology be not true. I admit also with Lord Selborne that if the religious foundations and sanctions of morality be given up, human life runs the risk of sinking in depravity, since morality without religion is insufficient for general civilization. I agree also with Mr. Martineau that theology cannot supply a base for morality which has lost its own; and I agree with what he further says, that morals, though they have a base of their own, and are second to nothing, are not adequate to direct human life until they are transfused into that sense of resignation, adoration and communion with an overruling Providence which is the mark of true religion."

"We speak of Providence," said Mr. Frothingham.

"We say life is a school; experience is an educator; existence is a discipline. Yes; but it is a school where lessons are taught in an unknown tongue, where the books are written in a tongue that nobody can read, and the teachers use signs instead of speech. It is a gymnasium where the institution does not seem to understand the pupils, and the pupils do not understand the implements. If we could only be sure that a superintending power, wisdom, love, looked after the individual interest—the *individual* interest: that is the thing; not the interest of the ages, not the welfare of man, but your happiness and mine—then we could look with tranquil eye upon the world. But can this be proved?"*

"The being of God implies providence," replied the Dean. "Through providence we feel our way back to being; the indications of care point to the care-taker. The notion of providence is as universal as the notion of Deity. 'All things are providence,' said Marcus Aurelius. The poets, ancient and modern, prose writers, too, bear witness to the general, we may say, the instinctive belief in a great care over the world of things and men. It may be doubted whether the belief is ever absent from the human mind, or can be ever eradicated.† But logic and observation beat the personal and special providence off the ground. The philosopher gives up the theory of final causes as inapplicable to a system regulated by universal and impartial laws."‡

"But," asked the Dean, "when you use such awful words as 'law,' and 'order,' how can you hesitate to

* Visions of the Future, p. 106.

† Frothingham: Religion of Humanity, p. 180.

‡ Ib.

use the other tremendous words, 'cause' and 'God?' What is *law* but steady, continuous, persistent, consistent power; cumulative, urgent, regulated power; power moving along even tracks and pushing toward distinct aims; power with a past behind it, and a future before; power that is harmonious, rythmical, as Comte calls it, *orderly?* Can Comte conceive of such power as unintelligent? Can he conceive of it as intelligent and purposeless? Can he conceive of it as purposeful and yet as uncausing? Does not the very word 'force,' as science uses it, compel the association with mind and will? And can we think of mind and will without thinking with the same brain-throb of wisdom and goodness? It seems as if one must have completely suppressed in his memory the constitution of the human mind, to help being dragged by such overpowering words as 'law,' 'will' and 'order' upward out of all the meshes of materialism towards the Infinite and Perfect One. It is logical precision itself that lends wings. The very stones of fact become ethereal, and float us upon the eternal sea." *

"So far," said Professor Huxley, "as the laws of conduct are determined by the intellect, I apprehend that they belong to science, and to that part of science which is called morality. But the engagement of the affections in favor of that particular kind of conduct which we all call good, seems to me to be something beyond mere science. And I cannot but think that it, together with the awe and reverence, which have no kinship with base fear, but arise whenever one tries to pierce below the surface of things, whether they be material or spiritual, constitutes all that has

* Frothingham: Religion of Humanity, p. 40.

any unchangeable reality in religion. And just as I think it would be a mistake to confound the science, the morality, with the affection, religion ; so do I conceive it to be a most lamentable and mischievous error, that the science, theology, is so confounded in the minds of many—indeed, I might say, of the majority of men.

'I do not express any opinion as to whether theology is a true science, or whether it does not come under the apostolic definition of 'science falsely so called ;' though I may be permitted to express the belief that if the Apostle to whom that much misapplied phrase is due could make the acquaintance of much of modern theology, he would not hesitate a moment in declaring that it is exactly what he meant the words to denote. But it is at any rate conceivable, that the nature of the Deity, and His relations to the universe, and more especially to mankind, are capable of being ascertained, either inductively or deductively, or by both processes. And, if they have been ascertained, then a body of science has been formed which is very properly called theology. Further, there can be no doubt that affection for the Being thus defined and described by theologic science would be properly termed religion ; but it would not be the whole of religion. The affection for the ethical ideal defined by moral science would claim equal if not superior rights. For suppose theology established the existence of an evil deity—and some theologies, even Christian ones, have come very near this—is the religious affection to be transferred from the ethical idea to any such omnipotent demon ? Better a thousand times that the human race should perish under his thunderbolts than it should say,

'Evil, be thou my good.' There is nothing new, that I know of, in this statement of the relations of religion with the science of morality on the one hand and that of theology on the other. But I believe it to be altogether true, and very needful, at this time, to be clearly and emphatically recognized as such by those who have to deal with the education question.

"We are divided into two parties—the advocates of so-called 'religious' teaching on the one hand, and those of so-called 'secular' teaching on the other. And both parties seem to me to be not only hopelessly wrong, but in such a position that if either succeeded completely, it would discover, before many years were over, that it had made a great mistake and done serious evil to the cause of education. For, leaving aside the more far-seeing minority on each side, what the 'religious' party is crying for is mere theology, under the name of religion; while the 'secularists' have unwisely and wrongfully admitted the assumption of their opponents, and demand the abolition of all 'religious' teaching, when they want to be free of theology—burning your ships to get rid of the cockroaches! But my belief is, that no human beings ever did, or ever will, come to much, unless their conduct was governed and guided by the love of some ethical ideal. Undoubtedly, your gutter child may be converted by mere intellectual drill into the 'subtlest of all the beast of the field;' but we know what has become of the original of that description, and there is no need to increase the number of those who imitate him successfully without being aided by the rates. And if I were compelled to choose for one of my own children, between a school in which real religious instruction is given, and one without it, I

should prefer the former, even though the child might have to take a good deal of theology with it. Nine-tenths of a dose of bark is mere half-rotten wood ; but one swallows it for the sake of the particles of quinine, the beneficial effect of which may be weakened, but it is not destroyed, by the wooden dilution, unless in a few cases of exceptionally tender stomachs. Hence, when the great mass of the English people declared that they want to have the children in the elementary schools taught the Bible, and when it is plain from terms of the Act, the debaters in and out of Parliament, and especially the emphatic declarations of the Vice-President of the Council, that it was intended that such Bible-reading should be permitted, unless good cause for prohibiting it could be shown, I do not see what reason there is for opposing their wish. Certainly, I, individually, could with no shadow of consistency oppose the teaching of the children of other people to do that which my own children are taught to do. And even if the reading of the Bible were not, as I think it is, consonant with political reason and justice, and with the desire to act in the spirit of the education measure, I am disposed to think it might still be well to read that book in the elementary schools." *

Here the host said, " perhaps, gentlemen, it may aid us in coming to some conclusion upon this important subject by getting Herbert Spencer's views upon it."

"*The influence of intellectual culture upon morality*," Mr. Spencer said, " as to rational legislation, based as it can only be on a true theory of conduct, which is derivable from a true theory of mind, must recognize as a datum the direct connection of action with feel-

* Huxley : Critiques and Addresses, pp. 49, 50.

ing. .. . It is never the knowledge which is the moving agent in conduct ; but it is always the feeling which goes along with that knowledge or is excited by it. Though the drunkard knows that after to-day's debauch will come to-morrow's headache, yet he is not deterred by consciousness of this truth, unless there is excited in him an adequate amount of feeling antagonistic to his desire for drink. Similarly with improvidence in general. Much of our legislation must be fruitless or injurious. We are at present, legislature and nation together, eagerly pushing forward schemes which proceed on the postulate that conduct is determined not by feelings, but by cognitions. For what else is the assumption underlying this anxious urging-on of organizations for teaching? What is the root-notion common to Secularists and Denominationalists, but the notion that spread of knowledge is the one thing needful for bettering behavior? This belief in the moralizing effects of intellectual culture, flatly contradicted by facts, is absurd *a priori*. What imaginable connection is there between the learning that certain clusters of marks on paper stand for certain words, and the getting a higher sense of duty? What possible effect can acquirement of facility in making written signs of sounds, have in strengthening the desire to do right? How does a knowledge of the multiplication table, a quickness in adding and dividing, so increase the sympathies as to restrain the tendency to trespass against fellow creatures? In what way can the attainment of accuracy in parsing and spelling make the sentiment of justice more powerful than it was ; or why, from stores of geographical information, perseveringly gained, is there likely to come increased

regard for truth? Not by precept, though heard daily; not by example, unless it be followed; but only by action, often caused by the related feeling can a moral habit be formed. And yet this truth, which mental science clearly teaches, and which is in harmony with familiar sayings, is a truth wholly ignored in current educational fanaticisms. 'Good character is more important than much knowledge.'

"*The influence of moral teaching* is supposed by others to improve conduct and diminish crime. They hold general knowledge to be inadequate, and contend that rules of right conduct must be taught. Already, however, reasons have been given why the expectations even of these are illusory; proceeding as they do, on the assumption that the intellectual acceptance of moral precepts will produce conformity to them. I will not dwell on the contradictions to this assumption furnished by the Chinese, to all of whom the high ethical maxims of Confucius are taught, and who yet fail to show us a conduct proportionately exemplary. It will suffice if I limit myself to evidence supplied by our own society, past and present, which negatives very decisively these sanguine expectations. What have we been doing all these many centuries by our religious agencies, but preaching right principles to old and young? Teaching by clergymen not having the desired effect, and now it is held that something more must be done—if, notwithstanding perpetual explanations and denunciation and exhortations, the misconduct is so great that society is endangered only after all this insistance has failed, is it expected that more insistance will succeed—commands and interdicts uttered by a surpliced priest to minds prepared by chant and organ-peal,

not having been obeyed when mechanically repeated in school-boy sing-song to a threadbare usher, amid the buzz of lesson-learning and clatter of slates? Certainly such influences as may be gained by addressing moral truths to the intellect, is made greater if the accompaniments arouse an appropriate emotional excitement, as a religious service does; while, conversely, there can be no more effectual way of divesting such moral truths of their impressiveness, than associating them with the prosaic and vulgarizing sounds and sights and smells coming from crowded children." *

"And no less certain," said Mr. Ingersoll, "is it that precepts often heard and little regarded, lose by repetition the small influence they had."

Mr. Herbert Spencer: "What do public schools show us? Are the boys rendered merciful to one another by listening to religious injunctions every morning? What do universities show us? Have perpetual chapels habitually made under-graduates behave better than the average young men? What do cathedral towns show us? Is there in them a moral tone above that of other towns? Nowhere do we find that repetition of rules of right, already known but disregarded, produces regard for them; but we find that contrariwise, it makes the regard for them less than before."

"It is evident," said the Dean, "upon the whole, the feeling which produces action is more likely to arise when moral truth is taught surrounded by imposing accessories of architecture, painted windows, tombs and dim religious light, than under other circumstances not calculated to excite emotions. While religious services in schools may not do all hoped

* Sociology, p. 58.

from them, yet the scholars would be worse without those services. That great religious influences go out from such universities as Oxford and Cambridge is undeniable. They are felt upon the lives and characters of the graduates in all after years. Look at the religious literature—the poems, the fictions, the essays, the theistic philosophies—that go from them. They feed the pulpit. With all the shortcomings inevitably incident to life anywhere, it may be confidently asserted that religious schools do more good as such than they would do as mere secular or non-religious schools. It is certain that we see more of this feeling leading to moral action in connection with religious services—with worship—than we find in culture without religious worship. The centre and lines of religion and morality coincide. But is it necessary to separate intellectual and moral and religious culture? Each should promote the other; and neither would seem to be sufficient by itself. All seem to agree with Mr. Spencer that moral truth needs the moral feelings of religion to make it effective. And now: Is religion, the inspirer of this feeling, dying? If so, morality is dying."

"The religious Positivism of Comte," said the host, "as interpreted by Mr. Mill, is religion without a God."

Mr. Mill said in reply: "We venture to think that a religion may exist without belief in a God, and that a religion without a God may be, even to Christians, an introduction and profitable object of contemplation. It has been said that whoever believes in 'the Infinite nature of Duty' is religious. Comte refers the obligations of duty, as well as all sentiments of devotion, to a concrete object, at once ideal and real: the Human Race, conceived as a continuous whole,

including the past, the present and the future. This he calls the Grand Etre, the great Being."

"Can we not, and for eighteen hundred years have we not," said the Dean, "had in Christianity, all the moral teachings that the philosophers, including Comte, propose, and vastly more? The morality they offer is already a part of and taken from Christianity. There is nothing new in Positivism except its metaphysical conceit of what they call 'the organism of Humanity.' There is absolutely no such thing as the *Grand Etre* of Humanity, as fancied by Comte, any more than there is anything in Positive morality new to Christianity."

III. *The Religion of both Worship and Morality—Christ.*

"The Master condemned the tree that bore nothing but leaves," remarked the Dean, "and the religious theories die that do not result in religious practice. But if there be no good practice with religion, is it likely that practice will be better without it? Religion without conduct will die now as it did in the past. This is the inexhaustible religion of faith and works—of creed and deed—of theology and morality. We have seen that Polytheism or the ancient religions of worship without morality became exhausted, and expired in Greece and Rome; and that Atheism, under the sham of Positivism, which claims to know by positive experience and observation the *laws* but not the *causes*, did not suffice in France; and that Agnosticism which denies all knowledge of either laws or causes—we have seen that these intellectual schemes excluding religion or not, by a vast majority of thinkers, regarded as sufficient for modern civilization; yet, both these elements of worship and morality, of faith and conduct, are found united in the

Christian religion. Has experience of the ages led us to any satisfactory philosophy of life? Is religion religion, without a morality, or can there be a true morality without a true religion? Christianity is not only a creed but a deed. As Polytheism looked only to duty to the gods, ignoring those to man, so Positivistic Atheism looks only to duty to man, ignoring both God and duty to God. Each has a truth belonging to the other, and each needed a truth the other had. To each the other was a half. That which Positivism discusses as the *essential* unity of Humanity, Christianity reveals as the *spiritual* unity of Humanity. Positivism is no new phase of thought. It is the milk of speculative opinion with the cream of Christianity skimmed off. It is 'the opposition of science falsely so-called.' It is science without a philosophy, and a religion without a God.* Its central thought is the continuous unity of the race, with its bond or *nexus* in society, as opposed to the unity of the race with its bond or unity in its Creator. That which is true in Positivism is a plagiarism from Christianity, and that in it which is not a plagiarism from Christianity, is worthless. Christianity without its morality, is a vain worship; without its worship, Christianity proposes an impossible morality. Faith inspires works, and works measure faith. There is no creature Christianity does not love; no right it does not recognize; no duty it does not enjoin; no social need it does not help; no social hindrance it does not oppose; no hope it does not cherish; no sorrow it does not soothe; and no grave it does not seal with a resurrection promise. We shall show the superiority of Christian worship and morality by contrasting them with the atheistical morality which seeks to supplant

* Mill's Comte, p. 120.

them. Something must govern conduct, and in the end, that will govern it which can govern it the best. The fittest wins. Is Christianity that? If not, what is better?

"*Christianity will survive as the fittest* of all social forces; that is, a Christianity uniting both faith and works, which only is true Christianity. It will live as long as it helps humanity. This law of the survival of the fittest, if it be a law, includes every principle of self-preserving superiority both in what a thing is in itself, and in its power to adapt itself to what it is not."

Dr. Frothingham said, "As to the creeds of to-day I believe the next hundred years will see great changes in them, but I do not think them destined to disappear."

The Dean said, "Nothing dies that is able to live. That is the best force that does the best work. In other words, that survives as the fittest—continues its existence—which helps everything, and which everything helps. Everybody preserves that which is necessary to everybody. People may destroy each other, but not the bread and the water, the light and the air which all need, and upon which all live. And why should religion die? Its superstitions will cease, but what part of Christian faith is wrong? Are its hopes of a better world—its comforts, its morals, its rites wrong? If all these and more are not good, what is better? Helping everything, it cannot perish, for the law of self-preservation compels everything in the end to help it. If morality with religion has not sufficed for the moral order of the world, is it likely that morality without religion will do any better? If the existence of a personal God and the im-

mortality of the soul be denied, is it likely that men will observe higher moral conduct with lower spiritual motives? If men will not be moral from a sense of obligation to God, however incomprehensible he may be, is it probable that they will be more moral by speculations about a fetish called Humanity, no less incomprehensible? We have seen man as an individual, but not Humanity as a whole. If men can bring themselves to believe in the existence of Humanity, how can they deny the existence of a Divinity? Humanity is but a name, and not a reality. The struggle of this hour is between the ancient theististic moralities of Christianity with theistic sanctions, and modern atheistic moralities of Positivism without sanctions of any kind. It is a struggle between a system with power and a system without power. Religion teaches a personal Power, and science, an impersonal Power in the universe, and that is all the difference between them.

"Christianity includes both theory and practice, both a rule and a life, both faith and works. 'Faith without works is dead.' Christianity with living power in it, is a conformity of the life to the rule. Religion is a sense of dependence and of responsibility. Pagan mythology was the first; Christianity is both; Atheism is neither. Dependence looks to a providence, and gives worship; responsibility looks to divine authority and gives conduct. Without a sense of responsibility, moral conduct is impossible, and worship is a superstition. *There is no moral truth new to Positivism that is not old to Christianity.* Let us put Christianity and Positivism side by side and see how far this is so. [What the Dean stated in a general way may here be shown in a more

particular way.] Christianity as a social force, is "(a) *Fittest in its nature.*

Christianity, over eighteen hundred years ago, taught THE UNITY OF HUMANITY IN GOD.

"In Him we live and move, and have our being. He giveth to all life, and health, and all things." Acts xvii, 32–32.

'The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse." Rev. i, 20.

Christianity also teaches a unity of Humanity in man.

CHRIST'S LAST PRAYER.

"Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they all may be one in us, that they may be made perfect in one." John xvii, 2.

"All ye are brethren." Matt. xxiii, 8.

"We are members one of another." Eph. iv, 25.

God "hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth." Acts xvii, 26. "For in Him we live and move, and have our being." Ib. 28.

"With God there is no respect of person, Christ came to call not the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

"But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard Him, and have been

Positivism, not more than fifty years ago, taught THE UNITY OF HUMANITY IN MAN.

"Humanity is the great Collective Life of which human beings are individuals; it must be conceived of as an organism —as having an existence apart from human beings, just as we conceive each human being to have an existence apart from, though dependent on, the individual cells of which his organism is composed. This Collective Life is in Comte's system the *Etre Supreme*, the only one we can know, therefore, the only one we can worship." (Lewes on Comte, p. 342, Bohn, Ed.)

"The power which may be acquired over the mind by the idea of the general interest of the human race, both as a source of emotion and as a motive to conduct, many have perceived; but we know not if any one before M. Comte realized so fully as he has done all the majesty of which that idea is susceptible. It ascends into the unknown recesses of the past, embraces the manifold present, and descends into the indefinite and unforeseeable future. Forming a collective existence without assignable beginning or end, it appeals to that feeling of the Infinite, which is deeply rooted in human nature, and which seems necessary to the imposingness of all our highest conceptions."

"That the ennobling power of this grand conception may

taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus, that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Eph. iv, 20.

"Ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." Acts xx, 35.

Is there anything new therefore, in Positivism? Has not Christianity from first to last sought to repress all forms of selfishness? The Master said, "Love thy neighbor as thyself. Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you."

have its full efficacy, we should, with M. Comte, regard the *Grand Etre*, Humanity, or Mankind, as composed in the past solely of those who, in every age and position, have played their part worthily in life. It is only as thus restricted that the aggregate of our species becomes an object deserving our veneration. The unworthy members of it are best dismissed from our habitual thoughts." (Mill's Comte, p. 123.)

"(b) *Fittest by its power of adaptation*, to the individual man, to society and to nations, *or the living for others, called Altruism.*

ALTRUISM OF CHRIST:

"For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Romans v, 7, 8. "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Gal. ii, 20.

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto un-

ALTRUISM OF COMTE:

Men must live not so specially for the good of each other as for the good of Humanity.

As to the moral affections, the Positivists say "that the Real Life is dominated by the affections. The heart is the necessary centre of our Unity. The social unity would be impossible without the discipline of the individual; but for such a task merely mental action is too weak. Considerations addressed only to the reasoning

feigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." I Peter i, 22.

"Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another: love as brethren; be pitiful, be courteous; not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise, blessing." I Peter iii, 8–9.

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us. And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God, loves his brother also." I John iv, 10–24.

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." Gal. vi, 2.

"Give to him that asketh thee. Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." Matt. v, 44.

"We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." I John iii, 16.

faculties amount to nothing at all in the presence of passion. The only discipline of which the individual is susceptible consists in the repression of personality by the development of sociality. Disinterested love must be awaked and stimulated and cherished as the only power capable of really quelling our great enemy—the true Satan—the naturally preponderating selfishness." (Edgar on the Positive Religion of Humanity.)

"We do not doubt that children and young persons will one day be again systematically disciplined in self-mortification; that they will be taught, as in antiquity, to control their appetites, to brave dangers, and submit voluntarily to pain, as simple exercises in education. Nor can any pains taken be too great to form the habit, and develop the desire, of being useful to others and to the world, by the practice, independently of reward and of every personal consideration, of positive virtue beyond the bound of prescribed duty." (Mill's Comte, p. 134.)

"The Golden Rule of Morality, in M. Comte's religion, is to live for others, *vivre pour autrie*. To do as we would be done by, and to love our neighbor as ourselves, are not sufficient for him. They partake, he thinks, of the nature of personal calculations. We should endeavor not to love ourselves at all. We shall not succeed in it, but we should make the nearest approach to it possible. Nothing less will satisfy him, as towards humanity, than the sentiment which

THE DUTIES TAUGHT BY CHRISTIANITY.

The Catechism taught each Christian child for centuries:

Q. What is thy duty toward God?

A. My duty toward God is, to believe in him; to fear him; and to love him with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength; to worship him; to give him thanks; to put my whole trust in him; to honor his holy Name and His Word; and to serve him truly all the days of my life.

Q. What is thy duty toward thy neighbor?

A. My duty toward my neighbor is, to love him as myself, and to do to all men as I would they should do unto me. To love, honor, and succor my father and mother; to honor and obey the civil authority; to submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters; to order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters; to hurt nobody by word or deed; to be true and just in all my dealings. To bear no malice nor hatred in my heart; to keep my hands from picking and stealing, and my tongue from evil speaking, lying and slandering; to keep my body in temperance, soberness and chastity; not to covet nor desire other men's goods; but to learn and labor truly to get mine own living, and do my duty in that state of life which it shall please God to call me.

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one of his favorite writers, Thomas á Kempis, addresses to God. *Amem te plus quam me, nec me nisi propter te.*" (Mill's Comte, p. 125.)

THE DUTIES TAUGHT BY POSITIVISM.

Positivism acknowledges no God, and therefore acknowledges no duties, reverence or responsibility to any. Humanity is in place of God.

A man's duties are rather to society than to himself. "Society," says Dr. Frothingham (Religion of Humanity), "preaches contentment, disinterestedness, peacefulness, faith, self-control, joy."

In Positive Philosophy, human nature is sufficient for human nature. If it needed supernatural help, there is none to supply it.

"Prayer," says Mill, "according to M. Comte, does not mean asking; it is a mere outpouring of feeling, . . but must be in all cases to women." (Mill's Comte, p. 136.)

"But," said another Positivist present, "though we may not propose a morality new to Christianity, yet Christian morality is so mixed up with supernaturalism that we can subject it to no scientific test as we can the Religion of Humanity, taught by our great philosophy."

"Right here," remarked the Dean, "be it well noted, that Christianity was the first to appoint the test of experience. 'Whoso doeth my will,' says Christ, 'shall know of the doctrine.' 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' Dare any merely human philosophy challenge such a test? If Christianity has not and cannot bear more, better and other fruit than the so-called Religion of Humanity, then renounce it. If there is anything more humane than the religion of Christ, what is it? What, as to man and before the laws of civilized countries, has done more for woman to sanctify her relations to man as wife; what has done more for her than the equity laws devised by Christian clergymen, as to her dower as distributee of her husband's estate? What has more protected children, lunatics and idiots? Who more than Stephen Langton, a Popish Cardinal, ever wrote such laws for human freedom as the Magna Charta? They are the bulwark of our liberties to-day. They entered, once for all, into the civil or juristic life of the world. Men are most free when possessed of that liberty over passions of selfishness and spiritual fear, wherewith Christ hath made them free. The Positivist cannot announce a desired dignity of humanity in its organic unity or ultimate exaltation, that Christianity has not announced for ages before, and yet announces as its peculiar and previous teaching. But there is this all-important distinction between this religion of human

conduct without religion and that religion of human conduct with religion, and that is one of *power*."

"The religion of unqualified altruism," remarked Mr. Spencer, "arose to correct by an opposite excess the religion of unqualified egoism."*

"I cannot forbear,"† said Mr. Lewes, "from pointing out one immense omission in Comte's Religion of Humanity. It makes religion purely and simply what has hitherto been designated morals. In thus limiting religion to the relations in which we stand toward one another, and toward humanity, Comte leaves an important element aside; for even upon his own showing, humanity can only be the Supreme Being of *our* world—it cannot be the Supreme Being of the universe. To limit the universe to our planet is to take a rustic, untravelled view of this great subject. If, in this our terrestrial sojourn, all we can distinctly *know* must be limited to the sphere of our planet, nevertheless even here, we, standing on this ball of earth and looking into the infinite of which we know it to be but an atom, must irresistibly feel and know that the humanity worshipped *here* cannot extend its dominion, *there*. I say, therefore, that supposing our relations toward humanity may one day be systematized into a distinct *cultus*, and made a religion, and supposing further our whole practical priesthood to be limited to it, there must still remain for us, outlying this terrestrial sphere, the other sphere named Infinite, into which our eager and aspiring thoughts *will* wander, carrying with them, as ever, the obedient emotions of love and awe. So that beside the Religion of Humanity, there must be Religion of the Universe; beside the conception of hu-

* See p. 182–186 of Spencer on Sociology.

† Comte's Philosophy of the Sciences, Bohn's edition, p. 342.

manity, we need the conception of a God as the infinite life, from whom the universe proceeds, not in alien indifference—not in estranged subjection—but in the fulness of abounding power, as the incarnation of resistless activity. In plainer language, there must ever remain the old distinction between religion and morality—between our relations to God and our relations to man; the only difference between the old and the new being that in the old theology moral precepts were inculcated with a view to a celestial habitat; in the new they will be inculcated with a view to the general progress and happiness of the race."

Mr. Mill replied : "M. Comte says, that assuming the existence of a Supreme Being (which he is as far from denying as affirming), the best, and even the only, way in which we can rightly worship Him, is by doing our utmost to love and serve that other great being (humanity) whose inferior Providence has bestowed on us all the benefits that we owe to the labors and virtues of a former generation. It may not be consonant to usage to call this a religion; but the term, so applied, has a meaning, and one which is not adequately expressed by any other word. Candid persons of all creeds may be willing to admit, that if a person has an ideal object, his attachment and sense of duty toward which are able to control and discipline all his other sentiments and propensities, and prescribe to him a rule of life, that person has a religion; and though every one naturally prefers his own religion to any other, all must admit that if the object of this attachment, and of this feeling of duty, is the aggregate of our fellow creatures, this religion of the infidel cannot in honesty and conscience, be called intrinsically a bad one."*

* Mill's Comte, p. 121.

"That part of M. Comte's writings," said Professor Huxley, "which deals with the philosophy of physical science, appeared to me to possess singularly very little value. Great, however, was my perplexity, not to say disappointment, as I followed the progress of this 'mighty son of earth' in his work of reconstruction. Undoubtedly '*Dieu*' disappeared, but the *Nouveau Grand-Etre Supreme*, a gigantic fetish, turned out brand-new by M. Comte's own hands, reigned in his stead. 'Roi,' also was not heard of; but in his place I found a minutely defined organization, which, if it ever came into practice, would exert a despotic authority such as no Sultan has rivalled, and no Puritan Presbytery in its palmiest days could hope to excel. While as for the 'Culte systematique de L'Humanite,' I, in my blindness, could not distinguish it from sheer Popery, with M. Comte in the chair of St. Peter, and the names of most of the saints changed.* In fact, M. M. Comte's philosophy, in practice, might be compendiously described as Catholicism *minus* Christianity."†

"That is no religion," remarked the Dean, "for one which is not a religion for all. All may be saved by Christ, but Altruism or the sacrifice of one's self is an impossibility to the totality of human nature, except as a Christian grace. The invincible law of self-preservation absolutely forbids it. Under cases most like it, the apparent Altruist has some compensating and selfish motive. His own pleasure, in some way, is paramount. It is useless to ignore the real weakness of human nature for a romantic theory. All lines of interest centre at the grave. If the grave be dark, all

* Huxley: Lay Sermons, p. 148.

† Ib., p. 140.

else is dark. If life be all, its brevity and troubles make it pessimistic to most. The weak man cannot reach the ideal virtues of the strong few. Virtue may be its own reward, not its own inspiration, and weak human nature must be driven to seek it by fear or drawn to embrace it by hope."

(c) *Fittest in its power of resistance.*

The Dean continued, "It has struggled with the poverty of its disciples and survived ; it has struggled with the enervating and corrupting wealth of its disciples, and survived ; it has struggled with the power of Emperors, and survived ; it has struggled with the captious cavils of philosophy, falsely so-called, and survived ; it has struggled with unscientific opposition of science, and survived ; and for over eighteen hundred years, while all else changed, empires rising and crumbling, conquerors re-mapping the nations, schools of philosophy blazing and expiring in darkness, in spite of faggots, beasts and dungeons, this religion has survived.

"It is now confronted by Positivism—the boldest and the weakest inherently of all opposers. One class say they know nothing of anything ; and another claims to know nothing but laws. But they cannot tell what these laws are, and the laws will not talk about themselves—or, in the language of you, Mr. Mill, 'the laws of nature cannot account for their own origin.' This positive agnosticism and this agnostic positivism are the giants to overthrow Christianity ! But in the eternal fitness of things this cannot possibly be—they attempt too much. Other skepticisms of more strength have failed before them. As often as humanity relies merely upon itself, it fails. It failed in Greece in the very face of all the Philoso-

phers. It failed in Rome in the face of the Republic and in the face of the Empire. It failed in France, when the goddess of Reason was enthroned and legalized assassins cut the throats of her worshippers. It fails even within the pale of the Church, just so far as professing Christians fall under a worldly spirit, and aim at worldly ends. It fails in every individual, as in Peter, who trusts in his own strength. Withhold the sun from the seed, and gravitation from the atom, the molecule, or the mass and they are dead. Nothing has power in itself. Power is a gift, and the greater the power the more distant its source and the profounder the mystery. Humanity, *in itself*, has power of neither mind, motive nor deed. 'We know but in part.' 'We fade away suddenly like the grass.' The mistake of many is in shutting their eyes to the omnipresence of the dependence. Indeed, they admit it when they attempt to set up the organism of Humanity, but they strangely deny it when they state the religious conditions of that Humanity. Environment is a momentous fact in human character and conduct. Every relation helps or hinders us. Superior minds help inferior minds, and just how high this help is to go, no one can tell. So weak is man in himself that he could not be left alone. Christianity more emphatically than Positivism, reaches the unity of the race, in saying, that as 'we are members one of another, so we are to bear one another's burdens.' As each belongs to all, all are to help each. Conduct is most deficient even in the best. The good we would do, we do not, and the evil we would avoid, that we do. With all the help of the glorious progressions of civilization of the past—all its speculations—sciences, poesies, ora-

tions, maxims of truth ; with all its Psalms, and prayers and sacrifices, with the best that man alone could do, and the divinest help that he sought and obtained from God, how has execution faltered upon promise and intention, and how far short has conduct come from the dignity of Humanity and the glory of God ?

" Let it be once admitted that there must be some religion as distinguished from a non-religious morality, and the Christian religion will submit its divine claims to the judgment of mankind. No such faith has ever been so tried and so triumphant. It has proved the fittest moral factor in all the past and can be well trusted in the future. Religion is man's instinctive dependence on some power, conceived of as many or as one, supreme of all ; and it is expressed either by ritualistic worship or by moral conduct or by both. Mr. Mill alludes to religion as 'that feeling of the Infinite, which is deeply rooted in human nature.' Polytheism, embracing the worship of ancestors and of the Olympian gods, is worship without conduct ; Monotheism, including Judaism and Christianity is the worship of the One God with conduct ; and Atheism, including Positivism and Agnosticism is the effort to attain a morality announced by the intellect, without worship, and independent of any and all supernatural considerations. Most men think this impracticable. The evolution of religion, like all evolution, dropping nothing and unifying all things, may rise from the idea of many gods to the idea of one God, but not expire in the idea of no God. Evolution extends, not restricts, and looks to perfection of its object, not its extinction. So far from the underlying idea of religion—theism—fading out in

Atheism, it rather rises higher to a more perfect ideal of Power. As religion is a fact, it will be certain to go on by the law of continuity, unless the hindrances to it be overwhelming. But are they of that nature and strength? The cause of whatever religious indifference there may be, is not in any recently discovered weakness or invalidity in its truth, but in the environment of indifference occasioned by the intense absorption of the minds of men by other subjects. The people do not stop to consider religion. The cares and pleasures and riches of this world come in and drive out the awe and love of the soul, which is religion. If religion be not inherently perishable, it will continue to live, though an unfriendly parallel may live by its side. The question is not whether other things may live for awhile, but, 'Is Religion Dying?' We say not, because its hindrances are not internal but external and transient. No competing influence has anything like its moral power. Trouble will bring us back, so that the world will see and acknowledge religion again.

"Whatever freedom of will men may have, tends to prevent a coercion of faith. Religion must be favored by religious conditions. Environment affects religion as it does all else. Shakespeare says that one fire drives out another fire: in other words, as the mind has but 'a single eye,' it is always pre-occupied by a single object. Much of one thing is less of something else. Inverse cor-relatives are not both present at the same time in the same place. The more thought the less is the feeling, and the more feeling the less is the thought. The excess of either unbalances the soul; and true religion and true philosophy is the equilibrium of both. The mind may

be pre-occupied by the curious researches of learning, the pampering pleasures of wealth, or the embittering privations of poverty. Men think not of the pleasures of heaven when their minds are full of the things of earth. Their hearts are lifted up. 'The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, my people do not *consider*.' For this reason as a feeling and worship, religion has ever had an unequal influence upon conduct, whether as to times or number of persons. 'Know this, also,' wrote Paul to Timothy, 'that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false-accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than the lovers of God ; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. From such turn away. For of this sort are they which are ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.'

"Thus we see that the Church has been warned to expect indifference, lukewarmness, denial of the truth. Though for eighteen hundred years, the Church has endured the external pressure at times of adverse political events and internal agitations as to doctrine or authority, it has steadily extended its religious and moral influence to every institution of civilization. At intervals, even from the first, these skeptical spasms have come and gone."

"The army of liberal thought," said Professor Huxley, "is, at present, in very loose order ; and

many a spirited free-thinker makes use of his freedom mainly to vent nonsense. We should be the better for a vigorous and watchful enemy to hammer us into cohesion and discipline ; and I, for one, lament that the bench of Bishops cannot show a man of the calibre of Butler of the 'Analogy,' who, if he were alive, would make short work of much of the current *a priori* infidelity." *

"There is now a straining," remarked the Dean, "after new theories of nature." †

"To what do you attribute this?" inquired the host.

"In my opinion," replied the Dean, "*First, men's minds are possessed with ambition for original thinking.*

"We hear a good deal of the joylessness of the present generation, and no doubt there is a greater unrest and a greater impatience among those who lead the forward movement of thought than in any former time, and partly, no doubt, this is true to want of trust, want of power to lean on any invisible hand ; partly, too, to a habit closely connected with this want of trust—a habit contracted by men of the greatest intellect, of straining to see or say something new. Even now we are sure that the tendency to grasp at new ideas is often fatal, not merely to the utilization of old truths, but to the mere holding of the ground which had been gained by our ancestors. All this razing to the earth of the moral and religious beliefs of former days is far more loss to man than the best of the new glimpses of truth are gain. And, indeed, the tend-

* Huxley : Lay Sermons, p. 62.

† See an article in Popular Science Monthly, from the Spectator for Nov., 1879, on Intellectual Straining in Authorship.

ency is to eradicate the temper of repose, the heart of confidence in what has been gained, and to substitute for it a constant reliance on the stimulus of an intellectual excitement, the very essence of which depends on change. This state of things existed among the philosophers at Athens. Paul says: 'The Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or hear some new thing.' Such mental fickleness of the few cannot long affect the religious faith of the many. It is the few that think more than they feel; but the many feel more than they think, and feeling is religion."

"We know very little," said Mr. Froude,* "of the conditions of intellectual energy. In the past history of mankind it has been intermittent. Periods of activity and progress have alternated with periods of rest, as if the mind was like the soil, which requires a respite of stagnation to recover from an exhausting crop. It is possible, it is even likely, that the appetite for change which has characterized the last century may be followed by a wave of spiritual and political conservatism, that science will pause for awhile in its discoveries, and that our new knowledge may be allowed time to shape itself into a form with some humanity in it."

"The psychical history of our race," remarked Professor Winchell, "presents a succession of religious and intellectual phases alternating with each other. Faith and intellect move in two equal intersecting orbits, having a common centre. When the crisis comes and faith and intellect change places, both are found to have gained by all preceding alternations. Sometimes, faith and intellect have been united

*North American Review, December, 1879.

and sometimes disunited, but always, by the law of antagonism or of co-operation, they have left the moral life of man upon a higher plane. These revolutions need not surprise us. They come and they go, not in fixed periods, but by the fixed law of exhaustion and repair.

"*Second—The minds of men are preoccupied with the materialism of science, as another cause of Atheistic or, at least, Agnostic doubt.*

"Scientific investigations have always, in the end, strengthened religion. Religion fears that science will discover too little rather than too much. Ignorance is more destructive than knowledge, whether in secular or sacred directions. But it is *knowledge*, not *theories*, all need." Said the Dean:

"Materialists discovering some of the potencies manifested in matter, assume them to be self-existent or eternal, and so, deifying force, deny that there is any creating Being behind the potencies. To this impersonal force, the mind of man soon brings itself into utter denial of all accountability. Matter never catechises. Then the sense of moral obligation ceases; the moral man goes down, and, to the extent of the individuals thus morally collapsed, society goes down. The sense of right and wrong is immediately connected with a belief in some Supreme Being to whom man is responsible. If there be no such being, there is no right and no wrong; for before the march of Fate, things are inevitably what they are, and therefore neither right nor wrong. Right and wrong belong to free, not necessary action. Duress takes all responsibility out of conduct. But it is said that these materialists separate morality from religion, and live innocent and moral lives without belief in a personal

God. It must be remembered that these men have been reared by religious parents, in religious homes, and pass their lives associated with those who believe in and worship a personal God. From such influence they cannot escape. Besides, they do not draw the social consequences of their material theories. They hold on more or less consciously to old conclusions as to moral accountability, while they indulge new theories of material manifestations. No man is an out and out Atheist; but so far as he is an Atheist, just so far he morally breaks down, except as held up by the moral influences of those around him who are not Atheists. There is no ultimate triumph in Atheism.

"*Third—The conceit of science or a mind pre-occupied with one line of thought sees no importance, no interest, in other thoughts. Special minds give undue importance to special ideas.* Religion craves all possible light—light is the mantle of God. The Church has been the great school teacher in the past. In 836 the Council at Rome established schools for the poor. So did the Council at Lateran, 1179, and the Council at Lyons, 1256. The Church established nearly all the great schools and colleges of Europe. Most men of great learning, such as Copernicus and Newton, have been great churchmen; so that it is not culture that injures religion and so civilization, but a culture that is narrow and exclusive of the moral. A little learning is, and ever will be, a dangerous thing. The world daily sees those who are educated just enough to make fools of them. The crazy conceits of the half educated Atheists are more destructive of personal happiness and social order than the credulous superstition of the Middle Age peasant. That is best for man which leads to the best conduct. In the religion

of a godless nature, man is compelled to do as he does, and one act is as right as another. This evident error will work its own correction.

"*Fourth—The Two Philosophies.*

"But this belief in a nature without a God, leads to two different philosophies of life. The cultivated few hope to find social order in philosophy without religion, but the uncultivated many care for neither philosophy nor religion, and disorder society by their brutal wills. To the fortunate all is for the best; to the unfortunate all is for the worst; both are indifferent to God, whom they deny. The rich are optimists; the poor are pessimists. One enjoys his wealth with indifference to the poor; and the poor groans under his dark fortunes with a despairing hatred of the rich. The rich thanks no God for his wealth, and the poor fears no God when in anarchy he seeks to revenge himself on the rich. The one says: 'Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry, for thou hast much goods laid up in store.' The other says: 'There is no God, no hell, no heaven, no hereafter, no right, no wrong, and I will be most of the fiend now, as there can be nothing of the saint in the blank hereafter.'

"Now to what extent is this disorganizing philosophy to prevail? The skeptical scientists are few as compared with the whole population; and they are few as compared with the religious scientists. Galton, in his work on 'Men of Science,' shows that seven out of every ten men of science in England belong to some branch of the Christian church. Even the other three-tenths, who may ignore religion, are not agreed among themselves. All that skeptics of any age have done is to tear down. Nihilism is the result. They claim to know nothing of matter in the past or

of matter in the future, and admit that inexorable fate dominates them in the present.

"This is the end many learned of both sexes have reached in Russia, and some of all classes in Germany, France and in this country. What can be expected from such a philosophy of despair? The worst might be expected, if it were not the fact that these disorganizing elements are opposed one to the other, and no one overwhelmingly numerous. The great mass and average of people have no time to confuse themselves with disturbing speculations; the rich, with their easy apathy, are necessarily few in number, and the multitude of the despairing poor are powerless to destroy for any long period of time. Revolutions are exceptions. There must be in the nature of things more order than disorder in the world. Wrong conditions soon right themselves.

"*Fifth—A Moral Interregnum is Moral Chaos.* A change of religion is a change of morality, and any possible interregnum would, of course, be so far destructive of civilization. It is equally certain that any possible religious interregnum would be destructive of all moral order. What is morality? It is the doing of that which ought to be done. But if the materialists be right, and there is no God, no future, and so no responsibility, who can say that one thing ought to be done more than another? Actions would not then be because they ought to be, but because they must be. According to materialists, men steal because they must, and burn, kill and outrage the innocent and helpless, not because they are wicked, but because they were created so to act, and must so act. Such a philosophy would authorize every crime, and is so understood by the Socialists and Revolutionists who

preach it. The deeds of men are responsible as conduct either to a personal finite man or to a personal infinite God, or they are irresponsible, as mere automatic, inevitable actions to an impersonal, compulsory nature or matter. But if actions are irresponsible to an impersonal, compulsory nature, then they are necessary actions and not moral conduct at all, being neither right nor wrong. But if what we do be either right or wrong, as conduct, there must be responsibility for wrong. If responsibility, it must be to man or to God. If matter be all, and there be no God, *a fortiori* there can be no man, except as a form of matter. If man be only a form of matter, then, as matter cannot be responsible to matter—man cannot be responsible to man ; so that, if there be no God, there can be no responsibility, and, if responsibility, no consequences for wrong and no safety to the right. Educated by this philosophy, the Communist soon learns to hold treason and patriotism, honesty and dishonesty, peace and violence, truth and falsehood to be equally right. This is the practical result of divorcing morality from religion, or human conduct from responsibility to some power above man. Men must choose between some kind of religion and the sword. Something must govern. In an age of selfishness, when the struggle for existence is universal and desperate ; when class is angry with class, men must become either soldiers or Christians, and for awhile perhaps both. And as anticipation of the future governs the present, and as religion has its power in the problems of the future, so religion ever has and will govern mankind. There are rhythms or inequalities of the religious force as of every other ; but as the soul of man ever confronts the eternal mystery, it will have its altars and its upward vision.

"It is a great mistake to suppose that Christianity is dying. So far from it, it is ever under the law of evolution, taking on new life. A limited few who entertain themselves with the material speculations of the ancient schools, reproduced in the modern, may become confused amidst a multitude of theories, but the average class have neither time nor inclination to study metaphysical infidelity. They are practical, and look to practical results. The danger of this class in this country is from irreligious customs introduced by atheistical foreigners, not from doubts suggested by investigations as to the validity of Christianity itself. Science seems receding from its atheistical materialism. Its knowledge is far more limited than it, at one time, confidently expected it to be. It has not discovered the principle of life. Herbert Spencer, with equal force and solemnity, writes, 'In all directions our investigations bring us face to face with an insoluble enigma.' We learn at once the greatness and the littleness of the human intellect—its power in dealing with all that comes within the range of experience, its impotence in dealing with all that transcends experience. We realize with special vividness the utter incomprehensibleness of the simplest fact considered in itself. The scientific man, more truly than any other, *knows* that in its essence nothing can be known. Even those rich, who, in the independence incident to wealth, are indifferent to religion, are even fewer in number than the scientific skeptics. It is true that the wealth of the ungodly rich is not sanctified, and is of no moral or religious use to the world, and in some respects may be against religion; yet death and the vicissitudes of life, especially in America, soon redistribute the fortunes of the few,

and so this class cannot long injure the influence of religion. The danger to society is in the irreligion of that class who, having neither learning, wealth, nor religious hopes, have nothing. They include those godlessly and partially educated—educated in thoughts and not in conscience—and these, uniting with the army of the unfortunate, the incapable, the unsuccessful, the idle, having nothing to lose and everything to be hoped for from social changes and political convulsions—this class, now, as with the Greeks and Romans, is an element of danger; and it is possible that they may disturb the social order but never destroy religion. Indeed, faith follows revolutions. The successor to Cæsar was Christ. The less religion, the more the despotism! Except a very few, the great champions of religion, of liberty and of humanity have been Christian men—such as the Priests of the Church against the feudal tyrants—the Hamdens and Sydneys—the Chathams and the Washingtons of the world."

"In point of fact," inquired some one of the company, "Is not religion declining in our Churches and seminaries of learning?"

"By no means," replied the Dean. "Christianity is increasing in the world. The Methodist Church this year appropriates $600,000 for missions against $550,000 last year. The following statistics of all the churches for thirty years show a gain in America:

	Population.	Per cent increase.	Churches.	Value of property.	Per cent increase.	Schools.
1850.....	23,191,896		38,062	$87,328,800		87,257
1860.....	31,443,321	36	54,009	171,397,932	42	115,224
1870.....	38,558,371	22	72,450	354,483,581	33	141,429

"Religious college statistics also show a great increase in the Christian religion:

	1853.	1878
Harvard	1 in 10	1 in 5
Brown	1 in 5	3 in 5
Yale	1 in 4	2 in 5
Dartmouth	1 in 4	1 in 3
Bodowin	1 in 4	1 in 3
Williams	1 in 2	4 in 5
Amherst	5 in 8	4 in 5

"With the founding of every new town or city, there is the cemetery, the school-house and the church. To say that religion is dying, is to say that the whole supposed precedure of evolution is a mistake, and that the world is going backward and not forward. No doubt many believers become cold, and the church may be somewhat powerless in the midst of a generation perverted by changeable science, corrupted and enervated, as of old, by plethoric wealth, and made bitter and despairing by the disappointed struggles of toil, but the doctrine of evolution is that everything progresses forever. We may be sure this is so of 'the truth that makes for righteousness.' The good that is in the Christian faith will be preserved, and the errors, if any, which have been added by man, will be dropped; but as a great faith, in its old and general doctrines, it will not only continue, but increase. The hopes of this are, among other reasons, in: (*a*) The recession of materialistic skepticism before the power of Christian thought which it has awakened. At first, the confident assertions of skeptical science captured the minds of many reading people, and threatened, as some thought, all the hopes of faith. But Christian thought soon rallied from its surprise. Strong, painstaking minds began to examine the new theories of science and the field was soon better understood. It was then discovered that old materialistic theories had come back under new

names—that words had been substituted for arguments—that theories had been accepted as science—that conclusions had not been warranted by premises; and then religion became the attacking party, the Nihilism of materialism began to appear in its social consequences, and scientists not only became more cautious in statements and inference, but their distinguished Virchow admitted that the great doctrine of evolution, which had assumed to dethrone theology, could not claim to be proved as a science. And now what? Religion will gladly welcome all light, whether from friends or enemies; and the more the better. Let religion know the worst that can be said against it, and then reply patiently, honestly and fully. If, after so many ages, Christianity, and the Jewish religion out of which it grew, can be shown to be false, let it be shown. Fortunately for Christianity, its unfriendly critics now show it no quarters. Let them strike to their hearts' content. Let the old fight go on and be over once more. Religion fears indifference more than enmity. The factors of the problem are unchanged, and so will the result be. Right and wrong, moral responsibility, social order, death, are the same as ever. Science will help theology to wider and stronger knowledge of God, His works and His economy. The more we know, the more we shall believe. The more we know of nature, the more we magnify supernature. 'The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and godhead.'

"(*b*) One, but not the least significant indication of the times, is the encyclical of his holiness the present Pope of Rome. He urges the Roman Priesthood to

resume the study of the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, and assault the ranks of skepticism. This, surely, is no sign of weakening on the part of that Church. The replies to skepticism now to be made by both Catholic and Protestant will display a theologic thought more glorious than any ever before it. The Greek Church shows no signs of decay. With an awakened interest in all branches of the Church, and less confident positions by the enemy; with a social revolution or two thrown in to prove the statement that righteousness alone exalteth nations, it may be confidently claimed that religion will not only not die, but will confirm its former confident command of the situation. In the outcome of things, change must result in improvement; but under all circumstances, religion is indestructible. The Master has promised that the gates of hell shall not prevail against His Kingdom. Those who tear down can never stand against those who build up. Over the gate of despair there will ever arise the bow of hope. The absence of the sun is not its extinction; and it is the nearest in the winter, when its beams are the coldest. Science, criticism, and political unfriendliness are to force religion to see its unanticipated and diviner strength. Religion has more to fear from ignorance than from enlightenment. It should urge the world to study, to take scales, retorts, and crucibles, and get at atoms, and find what lies below, behind, above and around them, and 'seek after God, if haply they may find Him, though He be not far from every one of us, for in Him we live, and move, and have our being.'

"2. *Christianity will survive by the laws of Evolution.*

"In the struggle for existence by the inherent nature of a thing, by its power of adaptation, or its power of

resistance, life is seen in a struggle with environment from without, but we are now to look at it as unrolling by the laws of its life within."

Mr. Herbert Spencer remarked, "No one need expect that the religious consciousness will die away or will change the lines of its evolution. Its specialities of form, once strongly marked and becoming less distinct during past mental progress, will continue to fade; but the substance of the consciousness will persist. That the object-matter can be replaced by another object-matter, as supposed by those who think the 'Religion of Humanity' will be the religion of the future, is a belief countenanced neither by induction nor by deduction. However dominant may become the moral sentiment enlisted on behalf of Humanity, it can never exclude the sentiment, alone properly called religion, awakened by that which is behind Humanity and behind all other things. The child by wrapping its head in the bed-clothes, may, for a moment, suppress the consciousness of surrounding darkness; but the consciousness, though rendered less visible, survives, and the imagination persists in occupying itself with that which lies beyond perception.*

"Nor will man escape this religious sentiment, even if he open his eyes, and see uniformities where the unenlightened intellect saw only mystery, and the awfulness of mystery. There ever arises the question, How came these uniformities? As fast as science transfers more and more things from the category of irregularities to the category of regularities, the mysteries that once attached to superstitious explanations of them become a mystery attaching to the scientific explana-

* H. Spencer: The Study of Sociology, p. 311.

tions of them; there is a merging of many special mysteries in one general mystery. The astronomer having shown that the motions of the solar system imply a uniform and invariably acting force he calls gravitation, finds himself utterly incapable of conceiving this force. Though he helps himself to think of the sun's action on the earth by assuming an intervening medium, and finds he *must* do this if he thinks about it at all; yet the mystery reappears when he asks what is the constitution of this medium. While compelled to use units of ether as symbols, he sees that they can be but symbols. Similarly with the physicist and the chemist. The hypothesis of atoms and the molecules enables them to work out multitudinous interpretations that are verified by experiment; but the ultimate unit of matter admits of no consistent conception. Instead of the particular mysteries presented by those actions of matter they have explained, there rises into prominence the mystery which matter universally presents, and which proves to be absolute. So that beginning with the germinal idea of mystery which the savage gets from a display of power in another transcending his own, and the germinal sentiment of awe accompanying it, the progress is toward an ultimate recognition of a mystery behind every act and appearance, and a transfer of the awe from something special and occasional to something universal and unceasing.*

"No such thing, therefore, as a 'Religion of Humanity' can ever do more than temporarily shut out the thought of a power of which humanity is but a small and fugitive product—a power which was in

* Ib.

course of ever-changing manifestations when humanity has ceased to be.*

"The anti-theological bias, ignoring the truth for which religion stands, undervalues religious institutions in the past, thinks they are needless in the present, and expects they will leave no representative in the future. . . . It generates an unwillingness to see that a religious system is a normal and essential factor in every evolving society; that the specialties of it have certain fitness to the social conditions; and that while its form is temporary its substance is permanent. In so far as the anti-theological bias causes an ignoring of these truths, or an inadequate appreciation of them, it causes misinterpretations. To maintain the required equilibrium amid the conflicting sympathies and antipathies which contemplation of religious beliefs inevitably generates, is difficult. In presence of the theological thaw going on so fast on all sides, there is on the part of many a fear, and on the part of some a hope, that nothing will remain. But the hopes and the fears are alike groundless; and must be dissipated before balanced judgments in social science can be formed. Like the transformations that have succeeded one another hitherto, the transformation now in progress is but an advance from a lower form, no longer fit, to a higher and fitter form; and neither will this transformation, nor kindred transformations to come hereafter, destroy that which is transformed, any more than past transformations have destroyed it."†

"Then," said the host, "if religion could die, must

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* Ib.

† The Study of Sociology, ch. xii, p. 313.

not morality die with it? It would seem that it must."

"*Morality without Religion is unsupported*,"* said Mr. Spencer.

"Without seeming so, the development of religious sentiment has been continuous from the beginning; and its nature when a germ was the same as its nature when fully developed.†

"Clearly, a visionary hope misleads those who think that in an imagined age of reason which might forthwith replace an age of beliefs but partly rational, conduct would be correctly guided by a code directly based on considerations of utility. A utilitarian system of ethics cannot at present be rightly thought out even by the select few, and is quite beyond the mental reach of the many. The value of the inherited and theologically-enforced code is that it formulates, with some approach to truth, the accumulated results of past human experience. It has not risen rationally but empirically. During past times mankind have eventually gone right after trying all possible ways of going wrong. The wrong-goings have been eventually checked by disaster, and pain and death; and the right-goings have been continued because not thus checked. There has been a growth of beliefs corresponding to those good and evil results. Hence the code of conduct, embodying discoveries slowly and almost unconsciously made through a long series of generations has transcendant authority on its side.

"Nor is this all. Were it possible forthwith to replace a tradition-established system of rules, sup-

* Ib. 359.

† Ib. 310.

posed to be supernaturally warranted, by a system of rules rationally elaborated, no such rationally elaborated system of rules would be adequately operative. To think that it would implies the thought that men's beliefs and actions are throughout determined by intellect; whereas they are, in much larger degree, determined by feeling.

"There is a wide difference between the formal assent given to a proposition that cannot be denied and the efficient belief which produces active conformity to it. Often the most conclusive argument fails to produce a conviction capable of swaying conduct; and often mere assertion, with great emphasis and signs of confidence on the part of the utterer, will produce a fixed conviction where there is no evidence, and even in spite of adverse evidence. Especially is this so among those of little culture. Not only may we see that strength of affirmation and authoritative manner create faith in them; but we may see that their faith sometimes actually decreases if explanation is given. The natural language of the belief displayed by another is that which generates their belief—not the logically-conclusive evidence. Nay, it is even true that the most cultivated intelligences, capable of criticizing evidence and solving arguments to a nicety, are not thereby made rational to the extent that they are guided by intellect apart from emotion. Continually men of the widest knowledge deliberately do things they know to be injurious; suffer the evils that transgression brings; are deterred awhile by the vivid remembrance of them; and when the remembrance of them has become faint, transgress again. Often the emotional consciousness overrides the intellectual consciousness absolutely as hyo-

chondriacal patients show us. All which, and many kindred facts, make it certain that the operativeness of a moral code depends much more on the emotions called forth by its injunctions, than the consciousness of the utility of obeying such injunctions. The feelings drawn out during early life toward moral principles, by witnessing the social sanction they possess. influence conduct far more than the perception that the conformity to such principles conduces to welfare. And in the absence of the feelings which manifestation of these sanctions arouse the utilitarian belief is commonly inadequate to produce conformity.

"It is true that the sentiments in the higher races are now in considerable degrees adjusted to these principles; the sympathies that have become organic in the most developed men, produce spontaneous conformity to altruistic precepts. Even for such, however, the social sanction, which is in part derived from the religious sanction, is important as strengthening the influence of these precepts. And for persons endowed with less of moral sentiment the social and religious sanctions are still more important aids to guidance.

"Thus the anti-theological bias leads to serious errors both when it ignores the essential share hitherto taken by religious systems in giving force to certain principles of action, in part abolutely good and in part good relatively to the needs of the time, and again, when it prompts the notion that these principles might now be so established on rational bases as to rule men effectually through their enlightened intellects." *

*H. Spencer: The Study of Sociology, pp. 307-8-9.

Some moments of silence followed these remarks, each one pondering them from the standpoint of his own philosophy.

"Still," said some one, "that the intellectual world of to-day is drifting away from the religious in belief and dogmatic theology of the past, is a fact which is more evident to the student, the wider his acquaintance with the current of contemporary thought in Christendom." *

"Most depends," replied the Dean, "upon your view as to what religion is."

"The class to which a man shall belong," remarked some one, "is not determined so much by his moral purity or the elevation of his motives as by his belief in the inspiration of the Scriptures, and the miraculous birth and resurrection of Christ and his performance of certain mental acts of acceptance toward his Saviour. If he complies with these conditions his moral constitution may be such that he has daily to repent of a propensity to enjoy the pleasures of sin, lets his notes go to protest, and finds it very hard to recall his cattle when he sees them grazing on his neighbors' fields; yet, if he fights manfully against his wicked propensities and repents of each bad deed, he may remain among the elect. But if one finds himself an atheist, or even a disbeliever in the divine mission of Christ, his righteousness and moral elevation are but as filthy rags. He may labor for humanity with the most disinterested devotion, be animated throughout his life by the highest and purest of motives, without doing anything to remove from him the curse of Adam." †

* North American Review, December, 1879.

† North American Review, December, 1879.

"You assume," rejoined the Dean, "two things: First, that the Christian will be the weaker member of society, with his Christianity, believing, sinning and repenting all his life; and, second, that the infidel will be the stronger one without it, being righteous and morally elevated, and a man laboring for humanity and of disinterested devotion, without sins and equally without faith. This, you assume, whereas the truth is, that the Christian will be morally stronger with his religion than he would be without it, and the infidel will be morally weaker without any religion than he would be with it. You compare a Christian of a weak character with an infidel of strong character, but reverse it and compare a morally weak infidel with a morally strong Christian and note the result. In the outcome of things religion will be placed according to its value. It has been oftentimes before, is now, and ever will be, challenged to show that it is necessary for the control of human conduct. Men are not governed by their intellects, as Mr. Spencer shows, but either by persuasion of feeling, or by force, or by both. In this alternative religion is sure of its supremacy.

"There is but one simple religion—the natural and the universal—whose manifestions are modified according to outward circumstances, but whose essence is always the same.*

"Dependence," continued the Dean, "is the one fact of the universe, and man in his weakness below ever reaches up to super-human power above. Man turns to the Infinite, and this is religion."

"The religious feeling," said Mr. Tyndall, "is as much a verity as any other part of human consciousness, and the immoval basis of the religious sentiment is in the emotional nature of man. There are such

* Dr. Pressence: Religions before Christ.

things woven into the texture of man as the feelings of awe, reverence and wonder." *

"If religion could die," continued the Dean, "all faith in the unseen Father, all hope of an hereafter, all anticipated reunions, all worship, all sacredness, all things that lift man above the brute—if all that cheers life and glorifies the openings of destiny were to expire, would life be worth living?

"Man without a future is an animal in the present. We keep our bodies under now for joys above the body hereafter; but if there be no hereafter the present appetite is man's strongest power. Human nature is too weak for present sacrifices without the hope of future compensations. Religion is a life of motives Self-preservation is the first law of nature. The sacrifice of one's self for another is only possible under hopes of a future reward or intense passions that obliterate the future. The grandest heroism is in acts which, for others, sacrifice the present for a future."

Dr. Martineau said that "Religion is reproached with not being *progressive;* it makes amends by being *imperishable.* The enduring element in our humanity is not in the doctrines which we consciously elaborate, but in the faiths, which unconsciously dispose of us, and never slumber but to wake again. What treatise on sin, what philosophy of retribution is as fresh as the fifty-first Psalm? What scientific theory has lasted like the Lord's Prayer? It is an evidence of *movement* that in a library no books become sooner obsolete than books of science. It is no less a mark of *stability* that poetry and religious literature survive, and even ultimate philosophies seldom die but to rise again. These, and with them the kindred services of devotion, are the expression of aspirations and faiths

* Belfast Address.

which forever cry out for interpreters and guides. And in proportion as you carry your appeal to those deepest seats of our nature you not only reach the firmest ground, but touch accordant notes in every heart, so that the response turns out a harmony."

Dr. Frothingham remarked : "As to the fact that revealed religion, as we call it, is stronger to-day than it was twenty years ago, I have no doubt. It is stronger here and in Europe, notwithstanding the much talked-of German materialism, and the religion of to-day is all the stronger than that of twenty years ago, in that it is throwing off the secretions of ignorance and presents fewer features incompatible with good sense and charity. I am no more a believer in revealed religion to-day than I was a year ago, but, as I said before, I have doubts which I had not then. The creeds of to-day do not seem in my eyes to be so wholly groundless as they were then, and while I believe the next hundred years will see great changes in them, I do not think they are destined to disappear. To sum up the whole matter, the work which I have been doing appears to lead to nothing, and may have been grounded upon mistaken premises. Therefore it is better to stop ; but I do not want to give the impresssion that I recant anything ; I simply stop denying and wait for more light."

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying : All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you ; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."